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[ISSUED SATURDAY, 23RD APRIL, 1921.]

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA. *Parliament*

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

FIRST SESSION, 1920-21.

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EIGHTH PARLIAMENT.

FIRST SESSION.

Governor-General.*

His Excellency the Right Honorable HENRY WILLIAM, BARON FORSTER, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Commonwealth of Australia.

* From 6th October, 1920.

Australian National Government.

(From 10th January, 1918.)

Prime Minister and Attorney-General Minister for the Navy	..	The Right Honorable William Morris Hughes, P.C., K.C.
	..	The Right Honorable Sir Joseph Cook, P.C., G.C.M.G.
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
Treasurer	..	The Honorable W. H. Laird Smith (28th July, 1920).
	..	The Right Honorable Lord Forrest, P.C., G.C.M.G.
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
	..	The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C. (27th March, 1918).†††
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
Minister for Defence	..	The Right Honorable Sir Joseph Cook, P.C., G.C.M.G. (28th July, 1920).
Minister for Repatriation	..	The Honorable George Foster Pearce.
Minister for Works and Railways	..	The Honorable Edward Davis Millen.
	..	The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C.
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
Minister for Home and Territories	..	The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom (27th March, 1918).
	..	The Honorable Patrick McMahon Glynn, K.C.†††
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
Minister for Trade and Customs	..	The Honorable Alexander Poynton, O.B.E. (4th February, 1920).
	..	The Honorable Jens August Jensen.†
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
Postmaster-General	..	The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C. (13th December, 1918).
	..	<i>Succeeded by</i>
Minister for Health	..	The Honorable George Henry Wise (4th February, 1920).
Vice-President of the Executive Council	..	The Honorable Walter Massy Greene (10th March, 1921).
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom.
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Edward John Russell (27th March, 1918).
		Appointed Vice-President of the Executive Council, 27th March, 1918.
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Alexander Poynton.
		Appointed Minister for Home and Territories, 4th February, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable George Henry Wise.
		Appointed Postmaster-General, 4th February, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Walter Massy Greene.
		Appointed Minister for Trade and Customs, 17th January, 1919.
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Richard Beaumont Orchard.**
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Sir Granville de Lanne Ryrie, K.C.M.G., C.B., V.D.††
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable William Henry Laird Smith.††
		Appointed Minister for the Navy, 28th July, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Arthur Stanislaus Rodgers.***

* Appointed 26th March, 1918.—† Removed from office, 13th December, 1918.—** Resigned office, 31st January, 1919.—†† Appointed 4th February, 1920.—††† Resigned 3rd February, 1920.—††† Resignation from office gazetted, 15th June, 1920.—*** Appointed 28th July, 1920.

Senators.

(From 1st July, 1920.)

President—Senator the Honorable Thomas Givens.
Chairman of Committees—Senator Thomas Jerome Kingston Bakhap.

*Adamson, John, C.B.E. (Q.)	*Glasgow, Sir Thomas William, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. (Q.)
Bakhap, Thomas Jerome Kingston (T.)	*Guthrie, James Francis (V.)
*Benny, Benjamin (S.A.)	†Guthrie, Robert Storrie (S.A.)
Bolton, William Kinsey, C.B.E., V.D. (V.)	Henderson, George (W.A.)
*Buzacott, Richard (W.A.)	Keating, Hon. John Henry (T.)
*Cox, Charles Frederick, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. (N.S.W.)	*Lynch, Patrick Joseph (W.A.)
Crawford, Thomas William (Q.)	Millen, Hon. Edward Davis (N.S.W.)
De Largie, Hon. Hugh (W.A.)	*Millen, John Dunlop (T.)
*Drake-Brockman, Edmund Alfred, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. (W.A.)	*Newland, John, C.B.E. (S.A.)
*Duncan, Walter Leslie (N.S.W.)	*Payne, Hon. Herbert James Mockford (T.)
Earle, Hon. John (T.)	*Pearce, Hon. George Foster (W.A.)
*Elliott, Harold Edward, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., D.C.M. (V.)	*Plain, William (V.)
Fairbairn, George (V.)	Pratten, Herbert Edward (N.S.W.)
Foll, Hattil Spencer (Q.)	Reid, Matthew (Q.)
*Foster, George Matthew (T.)	*Rowell, James, C.B., V.D. (S.A.)
*Gardiner, Albert (N.S.W.)	*Russell, Hon. Edward John (V.)
*Givens, Hon. Thomas (Q.)	Senior, William (S.A.)
	Thomas, Hon. Josiah (N.S.W.)
	*Vardon, Edward Charles (S.A.)
	*Wilson, Reginald Victor (S.A.)

1. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 21st July, 1920. 2. Elected 13th December, 1919. Sworn 21st July, 1920. 3. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 26th February, 1920. 4. Deceased reported, 6th April, 1921. 5. Appointed by State Governor in Council, 18th February, 1921. Sworn 6th April, 1921.

* Elected 13th December, 1919. Sworn 1st July, 1920.

to vote for this motion for the adjournment of the House in order that the Government may have time to consider their attitude, having regard to the way in which they voted against the Government yesterday. If the Country party meant anything by the vote yesterday—and two honorable members of the party have said that they did—then there is no reason why they should vote to-day to give the Government time to consider their position. If they do, they will never be able to explain their conflicting votes to the satisfaction of the people. The attitude taken up by the Country party towards the Government is clearly set out in a leading article published in this morning's issue of the *Age*, in which it is said—

The action which led to the contemptible anti-climax came from Mr. Jowett, a member of the Country party who votes with the Government, and often candidly speaks in its favour. In this respect he differs from most of the other members of his party, who roundly attack the Government, and even vote against it when it is safe, but are extraordinarily careful when there is a suggestion of danger.

That is the attitude of the Country party. If there is any possibility of the Government being defeated, they take fine care to see that some members of the party will vote with the Government. The honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) was quite sincere when to-day he nodded assent to the suggestion of the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) that, in submitting his motion yesterday, he had no intention of harming the Government. The Leader of the Country party (Dr. Earle Page) admitted that it was not the intention of the members of the Country party to take a vote on the motion for adjournment yesterday, and that it was taken only because the Government did not have a sufficient number of their supporters put up to talk the motion out. To-day, he told us that the members of the Country party were desirous of taking a vote on the question. If they were, how could the Leader of that party, after a meeting of the party, which lasted for several hours, make a statement to the representatives of the press that the fact that a vote on the motion was taken was due to the fault of the Government in not having put up speakers to prevent it? I listened attentively to the speech of the

honorable member for Illawarra (Mr. Hector Lamond) to-day. He made one of his usual vicious attacks upon his opponents. Those who know the honorable member as I do know that he has always been particularly vicious in attacking an opponent.

Mr. BRENNAN.—Did not the honorable member use the word "betray?"

Mr. LAVELLE.—He did, and no one should be a better judge of a betrayer. I can remember a time when the honorable member was an opponent of the Labour party, and when no one was more bitter than he against that party. He afterwards became a member of the Labour party, and when he was managing director of the *Australian Worker* there was no more bitter and vindictive critic of the capitalistic class than the honorable member was. He has changed his political coat on many occasions, and to-day he has made a bitter attack upon the Labour party, and has had the audacity to say that the members of that party are not very much concerned about the White Australia policy. He has said that the honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan) did not accurately put the position when he insisted that the Prime Minister had handed over the question of a White Australia to the League of Nations. But the statement made by the honorable member for West Sydney is absolutely true in every particular, as every member of this House must know. The honorable member for Illawarra stated that he secured for us the right to make the same laws for the territory over which we have been given a Mandate as we have to make laws for Australia itself. If the Prime Minister handed over to the League of Nations, as he did, the right to interfere with Australian domestic legislation in respect to the law dealing with immigration, that was certainly handing over to the League the right to deal with the White Australia policy. The League of Nations has now the right to interfere with our immigration laws, and it has the same right to interfere with immigration legislation in respect of the mandated territories.

The Prime Minister to-day used, as a political battle cry, the necessity that he

should go to London to represent Australia at the Imperial Conference. We who know the right honorable gentleman said last night that he would make use of that in order to bludgeon the Country party into support of the Government. His purpose is to throw the blame upon our shoulders, or upon the shoulders of the Country party, if Australia is not represented at the Conference by him. I say that, so far as honorable members on this side are concerned, we consider that the Prime Minister cannot adequately represent the people of Australia at the Imperial or any other Conference. He can only misrepresent Australia, because he is out of touch with the people, and does not represent Australian ideals or sentiments. It is in the interests, and not against the interests, of Australia that he should be prevented from attending the Imperial Conference. I shall, personally, do my best on this and on every other occasion to prevent the Prime Minister misrepresenting Australia on any question.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—What ideals can the Prime Minister not represent?

Mr. LAVELLE.—He cannot represent the ideals of the majority of the people of Australia. The honorable member who interjects cannot represent any ideal at all. He has never been able to represent his own, because he has always changed from one to another. It seems to me farcical to debate this question, because if the members of the Country party meant anything by the vote which they recorded yesterday they must vote with us against the Government to-day. There is no occasion to give the Government time to consider the position. They should have already considered their position, and the only honorable course open to them was to have resigned last night.

Mr. CORSER (Wide Bay) [3.51].—There is unquestionably a very serious position confronting us. It is far more serious than many honorable members seem to think. It behoves us to consider well what is expected of us at this time when it is so important that the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) should represent us at the Imperial Conference. I have great respect for many of the members of the Country party, and I believe that the majority of them act with common sense and justice. I am

confident that the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett), who submitted the motion for adjournment yesterday, was quite sincere when he stated distinctly that he did not launch that motion in the slightest degree against the Government or the Nationalist party.

Mr. JOWETT.—That is so.

Mr. CORSER.—I think that the members of the Country party were sincere when, on the floor of this House, they gave a pledge that they would not do anything which might prevent the Prime Minister taking up his duties in representing Australia overseas. I have confidence that at least the majority of the members of that party will honorably fulfil the pledges they have given in this House.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [3.53].—I wish to address myself to the position of the Farmers party in this House. I heard the honorable member for Wimmera (Mr. Stewart) claim that they were returned in spite of the other political parties. As a matter of fact, they got here with the consent of the other parties. We might just as well understand their true position in this House. The authorities of the Nationalist party said to the electors, "For God's sake keep the Labour party out, and give the Country party's candidate your second votes." At the same time the authorities of the Labour party appealed to Labour voters to keep out the so-called Nationalist candidates, and give their second votes to candidates of the Country party.

Mr. BLAKELEY.—In other words, "Throw your vote away."

Mr. MATHEWS.—Yes. The members of the Country party in this House are representatives of the thrown-away votes. It puts me in mind of the fact that the other day I saw some little children playing. One little girl was running along the street at the head of a number of others, and when I asked what game they were playing, she replied, "We are playing motors, and I am the stink." She was the cast-off of the others.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Does the honorable member mean to say that the Farmers party are the "stink"?

Mr. MATHEWS.—They are here to annoy both of our parties. They are quite justified in doing so. The members

of the Nationalist party cannot complain, because they helped to place them where they are, and we, on this side, cannot complain, because we did the same thing. At some twenty-four meetings in the country districts I implored Labour electors to give their second votes to Farmers candidates, and the Victorian members of the Farmers party owe their return to the second votes of Labour electors. The honorable member knows as well as I do that he holds a seat to which the same man has never been returned twice; a constituency that is as coy as a maiden. The Government cannot complain; it helped to elect the Country party. The Opposition cannot complain; it also helped to do so. The Country party annoys both of the others. But I am more cheerful to-day than I was last night. Then I anticipated a nasty election; now I think that the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) has arranged things satisfactorily, and I am satisfied.

Question put. The House divided.

Ayes	...	...	43
Noes	...	...	19
Majority			24

AYES.

Atkinson, L.	Hughes, W. M.
Bamford, F. W.	Jackson, D. S.
Bayley, J. G.	Jowett, E.
Bell, G. J.	Lamond, Hector
Blundell, R. P.	Lister, J. H.
Bowden, E. K.	Livingston, J.
Cameron, D. C.	Mackay, G. H.
Chanter, J. M.	Marks, W. M.
Cook, Sir Joseph	Marr, C. W. C.
Cook, Robert	Maxwell, G. A.
Corser, E. B. C.	McWilliams, W. J.
Fleming, W. M.	Page, Dr. Earle
Foley, G.	Poynton, A.
Foster, Richard	Prowse, J. H.
Fowler, J. M.	Rodgers, A. S.
Francis, F. H.	Ryrie, Sir Granville
Gibson, W. G.	Smith, Laird
Greene, W. M.	Stewart, P. G.
Gregory, H.	Wise, G. H.
Groom, L. E.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Higgs, W. G.	Burchell, R. J.
Hill, W. C.	Story, W. H.

NOES.

Blakeley, A.	Moloney, Parker
Brennan, F.	Nicholls, S. R.
Charlton, M.	Riley, E.
Considine, M. P.	Ryan, T. J.
Lavelle, T. J.	Tudor, F. G.
Lazzarini, H. P.	Watkins, D.
Mahony, W. G.	West, J. E.
Makin, N. J. O.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Mathews, J.	Anstey, F.
McGrath, D. C.	Page, James.

PAIRS.

Best, Sir Robert	Maloney, Dr.
Bruce, S. M.	McDonald, C.
Chapman, Austin	Cunningham, L. L.
Hay, A.	Catts, J. H.
Wienholt, A.	Gabb, J. M.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 4.3 p.m.

Senate.

Wednesday, 20 April, 1921.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens) took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

ADJOURNMENT.

POSITION OF MINISTRY.

Senator PEARCE (Western Australia—Minister for Defence) [3.1].—On Friday last the Senate adjourned, as was indicated by the Leader of the Government in this Chamber, to enable the Government to consider the position created in another place. A statement is being made, and certain action taken, in another place to-day, and until the result is known it would not be right for the Government to present any business in this Chamber. I therefore move—

That the Senate do now adjourn.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Senate adjourned at 3.2 p.m.

House of Representatives.

Wednesday, 20 April, 1921.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson) took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

POSITION OF MINISTRY.

Mr. HUGHES (Bendigo—Prime Minister and Attorney-General) [3.1].—I lay on the table a copy of a telegram received from the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. It is dated the 1st November, 1920, and concludes with an invitation to me to be present at the Conference to be held in London in June next. In order

that honorable members may have an opportunity to discuss this matter, I shall conclude with a motion for the printing of the paper.

Honorable members know that, as a result of the vote on the motion of adjournment of the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) to consider the question of oversea freights, the business of the House was taken out of the hands of the Government owing to their being in a minority of two.

When honorable members re-assembled on Friday, I moved the adjournment of the House in order to enable the Government to consider their position. During the course of the debate the honorable member for Cowper (Dr. Earle Page), Leader of the Country party, stated that members of his party had not called for a division; that the motion was not intended as one of censure upon the Government; that it was a friendly motion; and his party did not intend to take the business out of the hands of the Government.

The honorable member for Grampians said—

This motion of adjournment is not to be regarded as reflecting in the remotest degree upon the Government or upon any member of it, because for some considerable time past Ministers have done everything possible to bring about a reduction of freights.

The Leader of the Country party further declared that it was most important that Australia should be represented at the Conference to be held in London in June, and that the views expressed by me had received the indorsement of every section of the House. He said that, although he could not give any assurances of complete immunity during my absence, he would repeat the assurances he had already given, that his party would take no undue advantage of my absence. He said that, in his opinion, the Government ought to be satisfied with these assurances, and that I ought to represent Australia accordingly. In his opinion, the honorable member said, the Government ought to be satisfied with the assurances he had given, and arrange for Australian representation or make way for a Government that would do so. He voted for the adjournment in order that the Government might reconsider the position.

The Government has reconsidered most carefully the whole position, and on its behalf I desire to say—First, that I accept without reservation Dr. Page's assurance that the motion moved by his colleague was not intended to take the business of the House out of the hands of the Government; second, that I am prepared to accept the honorable member's assurances as to the attitude of his party during my absence.

I accept these assurances in the spirit in which I am sure they were given, namely, that, while his party felt that it would be wrong to grant such complete immunity to the Government as would preclude whatever proper criticism and action might be necessary to protect public interests, his party had no intention of embarrassing the Government, or of doing anything that would render Australian representation at the Conference ineffective.

I do not ask, then, for any further assurances from the honorable gentleman than those he has given; and I am not only willing, but most anxious, to proceed with public business and to make such arrangements as will enable me to leave for London next week, if the majority of this House so desires.

But, during the course of the debate on Friday, honorable members on the Opposition benches stated that, in view of the adverse vote, the Government ought to resign, and that I ought not to represent Australia at the Conference, as the majority of the people of Australia did not desire me to do so. While I do not for one moment accept the views of honorable members opposite as representative of the majority of this House or of the country, the fact remains that they have been expressed by honorable members opposite presumably on behalf of that party; and I submit, with all respect to the House, that the Government, and I, as the Prime Minister, cannot, in view of all the circumstances, ignore them and proceed to resume control of the business of the House, and to represent Australia in London, until this House has had an opportunity of expressing in a definite manner what its opinions are on these points.

In order, then, to afford honorable members an opportunity of expressing

and registering their opinion by a vote on these two points—(1) whether it is desirous that the Government should not regard the vote on Thursday as one intended to take the business of the House out of its hands; and (2) whether it wishes me to represent Australia at the Conference, I move—

That the paper be printed.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [3.8].—Another stage in the farce has arrived.

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order!

Mr. TUDOR.—May I say then that “the bluff has been called”? It appears to be difficult to keep oneself in order whilst speaking the truth. Last Friday I said something which, I understand, has caused the Nationalist party to pass a resolution. I said then that I believed that, were it not for the hatred—political hatred, of course—that some honorable members bear to members of the Opposition, the Government would not live five minutes. I believed that then, and I believe it now.

Mr. HUGHES.—How long do you think you would last if it were not for certain facts, of which you are perfectly well aware.

Mr. TUDOR.—I do not know what the right honorable gentleman means. I shall never hang on to a position so tightly that I cannot be dragged off, or prised off with a crowbar, or blown off with a charge of gelignite. Last week the conduct of business was taken out of the hands of Ministers.

Honorable members interjecting—

Mr. SPEAKER.—I think that honorable members of the Opposition should allow their Leader to be heard without so much interruption. It is my duty to see that every honorable member is given an opportunity to express himself without undue interruption, and if honorable members will not observe the Standing Orders they must not complain should I put them in force against them.

Mr. TUDOR.—I hope honorable members on all sides will restrain themselves, and that we shall have a full vote when the division is taken. I sincerely hope that no one will be absent. I realize just what the state of parties is, and that the numbers are not as the newspapers have reported them to be on the floor of the House, namely, thirty-eight

to thirty-seven. The numbers are actually thirty-seven all. Mr. Speaker's casting vote is the vote which either keeps the Government in office or puts them out of power. That is the real position, and I am not reflecting on you, Mr. Speaker, when I set out the actual facts. Included in the ranks of the thirty-seven Nationalists there is the honorable member for Capricornia (Mr. Higgs), who was elected as an opponent of the Nationalist party, and who has not since he left our party received a vote of confidence from his constituents. There is also the honorable member for Henty (Mr. Francis), who was not the official Nationalist candidate at the last general elections, but who was returned as an independent member. Then there is the honorable member for Perth (Mr. Fowler), who is by no means a staunch follower of the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes).

Mr. GREGORY.—What about the honorable member for Barrier (Mr. Considine)?

Mr. CONSIDINE.—He, at any rate, has received a vote of confidence from his constituents.

Mr. TUDOR.—The honorable member for Barrier was elected as a representative of the Labour party, and he has not given a vote against that party, even though he has had a disagreement with a certain branch of the body in New South Wales, namely, the Executive of our movement in that State, and has thereby left the Labour party. However, he can answer for himself.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—The honorable member need not worry. He will have my assistance in putting the Government out every time.

Mr. TUDOR.—Those other members, of whom I have spoken, are also at liberty, of course, to speak for themselves.

Mr. STORY.—You have not mentioned the honorable member for Robertson (Mr. Fleming).

Mr. TUDOR.—He, too, can speak for himself. The honorable member for Robertson went to his constituents, who gave him an answer concerning the matter of his leaving the Nationalists and joining the Country party.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—He is a Country member some days, and a Nationalist member at other times.

Mr. TUDOR.—Yes; some honorable members on the other side secured the support both of the Country party and of the Nationalist party in certain constituencies.

Mr. FLEMING.—They were given the dual nomination.

Mr. TUDOR.—It was doubtful, early in 1920, when this Parliament first met after the general elections, whether or not the honorable member for Robertson would join the Nationalists.

When the business of the Government was taken out of their hands last Thursday there were sixty-three honorable members who took part in the division. That number was larger than the average total of honorable members dividing in the ordinary procedure of this House. And, considering that it was a snap division, I would not have been surprised, as an old whip, if the numbers had been considerably less. Both the honorable member for Maranoa (Mr. James Page), as whip for the Labour party, and the honorable member for Boothby (Mr. Story), as one of the Government whips, were surprised at the numbers present when the doors were locked.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I was not. I knew where they were.

Mr. TUDOR.—Of the twelve honorable members who were absent, four belonged to the Labour party, there were two from the Country party, and six Nationalists. Every vote in the House is thus accounted for, and still the Government were in a minority of two. Now, the Prime Minister, in order to learn the opinion of this House—as his supporters put it—reads something, which is not new, about something which has not arisen since last Thursday's vote, but which consisted of a cablegram sent to the Prime Minister in November last, before Parliament had adjourned. The Prime Minister has received an invitation to attend the Imperial Conference. If he takes that as a vote of confidence he is welcome to do so. I think some one should attend the Imperial Conference on behalf of Australia, but I do not think the present Prime Minister should go, in view of last Thursday's division. The Government should have entered this

House to-day with a different form of resolution from that which has been moved by the Prime Minister. The right honorable gentleman should have asked for a straight-out vote of confidence. The Leader of the Country party (Dr. Earle Page) stated on Friday last that his party would not give complete immunity, but had no intention of embarrassing the Government.

Mr. LIVINGSTON.—Neither had the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett).

Mr. TUDOR.—I am not referring to the action of the honorable member for Grampians, but to the remarks of his leader. I understood the honorable member for Cowper (Dr. Earle Page) to say that no complete immunity would be given. In view of the positions of parties, and of the way in which certain honorable members voted, namely, in support of the Government, although they had not been returned to Parliament as Government supporters, there is only one honorable course open, and that is for the Government not to hang on to office for five minutes longer.

Dr. EARLE PAGE (Cowper) [3.16].—I must express my gratification at the conciliatory speech of the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes). The right honorable gentleman has moved a motion with the intention of showing that the Government are able at present to resume control of the business of the House. I desire to reiterate my statement of Friday last, namely, that the Country party cannot and will not give complete immunity to this or any other Government during the absence of their leader. We say that their own policy and their own conduct must be the determining factors in the treatment accorded to them by any other party in this House. I repeat that the Country party desires that Australia should be represented at the Imperial Conference; and if the Government select the Prime Minister as their representative, this party will not take any undue advantage of the right honorable gentleman's absence.

Mr. BLAKELEY (Darling) [3.18].—It is very interesting to hear the Prime Minister reading a statement which, I suppose, was drafted partly by the Country party and partly by the Government. In order that the honour of the Government may be restored it seems that it is necessary for this House to agree to a motion

to print a paper. I do not know what the people of Australia have done that they should have this paper thrust at them, and that they should be put to the expense of printing it. There are many ways in which the present crisis could have been got over. Several alternative courses I might mention for the information of the Government, in order that their honour should be fully restored. For example, they could "sack" their Whip. That would be one way of getting out of their difficulty. Another way would be for the Prime Minister's Secretary, or his messenger, to be reprimanded. There are, indeed, numerous methods by which honour could be satisfied; but we know that the Government occupy exactly the same position to-day as last Friday—only it is to-day a little more humiliating. The actual situation is the same, namely, that they have not the confidence of a majority in this House. If they continue to hold office they will do so at the pleasure of honorable members in the corner. The only honorable course left open to the Government, as I pointed out on Friday, is to resign, for it is not beyond the possibilities that a wireless message may be required to be sent to the Prime Minister recalling him when he has got half-way across to England. The right honorable gentleman and his colleagues should not leave Australia in that position. The question to be decided by the Government, the Country party, and the Opposition is whether the Government have a majority, and will retain it until the Prime Minister has returned from the Imperial Conference. On the figures, as disclosed in the vote last week, there is no justification whatever for the Prime Minister leaving Australia, because he has not a majority behind him, and has no guarantee that he will be the Prime Minister after he embarks for London. If a political crisis occurs after his departure for the Conference, Australia will be unrepresented at that gathering. The Government and their supporters should pause before they accept a position that is purely temporary, and cannot last. The Government have been tottering for a long time, and now they are practically finished. The foundations upon which their majority was built are unsound. It is likely that two or three of their own supporters and members of the Country

party are merely waiting until the Prime Minister embarks before they let fall the sword which will destroy the Government.

Mr. CONSIDINE (Barrier) [3.21].—In order to make my position clear, and to give honorable members an opportunity of a straight-out vote, I move—

That the following words be added to the motion:—"And that in the best interests of the citizens of the Commonwealth the Prime Minister should immediately tender his resignation to the Governor-General."

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Tudor) has named several honorable members who have seen fit to revise their political views since last election, as well as others now supporting the Government, but who were not elected on the Nationalist ticket. All these honorable members can speak for themselves. I desire to refer particularly to an interjection made by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory), who asked, "What about the honorable member for Barrier?"

Mr. GREGORY.—I meant that you were outside the party.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—If that was what the honorable member wished to convey by his interjection he was simply reminding other honorable members of the obvious, and was not in any way contributing to the debate. I am here in the interests of the working classes, as I see them, and any Government or party whose policy is in their interests will have my support. For this reason I am in opposition to the present Administration. I submit my amendment to the motion because I do not believe the present Administration are functioning, or can function, in the interests of the working classes. If by the turn of fortune's wheel some other party become the occupants of the Ministerial benches, their policy will be the test of whether I still sit in opposition or support them. If they do not act in the interests of the working classes, out they will go, if my vote can put them out.

Mr. J. H. CATTS (Cook) [3.26].—The Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) has very obviously receded from the position he took up at the end of last week. He was then charged by the Leader of the Country party (Dr. Earle Page) with having used a vote of this House as a means to bludgeon the Country party into support of the Ministry, and with flogging the

question of the Imperial Conference for purely party purposes. Now he has come along with a very tame proposition. He is not affected by the refusal of the Country party to give him those immunities and guarantees which, at the end of last week, he was so determined to wrench from them. And, while the Prime Minister has receded from his former position, the Leader of the Country party over the week-end made a further statement, in which he insisted more definitely than before that his party owes no allegiance whatever to this Government. In what was obviously a carefully prepared statement to the *Sydney Sun*, he said—

The Country party is essentially a party distinct from any other, and decides to remain so, because it is suspicious of the influences behind the other parties. It has its own organization, its own offices, its own party rooms; but has not a signed party discipline that compels its representatives to vote for principles they disapprove of simply because another party or the Government advocates them. It supports good government and good legislation. It does not seek office, but it will not refuse to take the responsibility for its actions if called upon to do so.

Listen to these significant words—

It has given support to the existing Government to enable it to carry on the government of the country, but it disapproves of the continued extravagance and lack of control of the present Administration, and owes it no allegiance, and does not hesitate to condemn and criticise.

The Country party disapproves of the Administration, of its continued extravagance and lack of control over Public Departments, and as that party owes no allegiance whatsoever to the Government, Ministers are without their majority in the House. Previously a general support was accorded the Government by the Country party; there was no announcement of its complete independence and no announcement of its condemnation of the Government. If the statement made over the week-end by the Leader of the Country party had been couched in the terms of a censure motion, it could not have been more sweeping or more condemnatory, because he states that the party has no confidence in the Government. Still the Prime Minister is prepared to carry on, and to leave for London as the representative of Australia at the Imperial Conference upon the result of a motion for the printing of a cable some

six months old. All I can say is that this is a very modern application of the late Alfred Deakin's description of the Prime Minister being dragged squealing out of the tart shop. It shows that it is impossible to get the right honorable gentleman out of office, and that no expression of condemnation of his Government by the Country party will suffice to do so. There is no question of expressing confidence in the Government by ordering a document six months old to be printed. In the face of a statement such as that made by the Leader of the Country party, one would have thought the Prime Minister would have definitely challenged the House as to whether his Government possessed its confidence. But he does nothing of the kind. Quite regardless of this very outspoken expression of want of confidence in his Ministry he is still prepared to carry on the administration so long as the House will agree to the printing of a certain paper. If he is prepared to leave Australia for his mission across the seas under such circumstances he will have only himself to blame if he finds that within a few weeks of his departure the House is in the turmoil of a general election.

Mr. HUGHES.—If the honorable member thought there was any possibility of a general election he would tie me down with chains.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—The right honorable gentleman knows that if I could tie him down with chains he would be bound very tightly in regard to his mission, if he went away at all. But, although it is not within the power of the Labour party to tie his hands, it is within its scope to point out the position he occupies in the House, and the fact, upon the declaration of the Leader of the Country party, that the Government have not a majority, and are, therefore, without a warrant to carry on the business of the country. The putting forward of a motion for the printing of a trifling paper is not a proper challenge to the House as to whether the Government possesses the confidence of the House or the country, and, in view of the later utterances of the Leader of the Country party, it is only right that some more definite means should be provided, by the Government or the Country party, to determine whether the Ministry does possess the confidence of Parliament.

Mr. CHARLTON (Hunter) [3.34].—On Friday last the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) moved the adjournment of the House in order to enable the Government to further consider their position. Evidently that further consideration has been given with the result that the Government have backed down from the position they then assumed. Honorable members will recollect that on the preceding Friday the Prime Minister, speaking in connexion with the invitation to attend the Imperial Conference, made it very clear that his Government must have immunity during his absence. On the following Thursday a vote was taken in this House which was against the Government by a majority of two, and led us into the present position. On Friday last the right honorable gentleman again said that unless some guarantee was given that the Government would be safe during his absence it would be necessary for him to give further consideration to his position, but the Leader of the Country Party (Dr. Earle Page) said that while his party were prepared to give reasonable support to the Government during the absence of the Prime Minister they would not grant it immunity. In the absence of such immunity, it was quite evident that, during the Prime Minister's absence, the Government would propose to confine the business of the house to the Tariff, and last Friday the Prime Minister said that nothing else would be dealt with.

Mr. HUGHES.—That is so.

Mr. CHARLTON.—That is to say, although urgent matters might require attention, they must stand over until the Prime Minister's return. Although the people outside are crying out daily for this Parliament to grant relief in certain directions, the legislation must stand over during the right honorable gentleman's absence, because the Government have not a sufficient majority. It would have been better had the House been called together last February, so that these matters could be dealt with instead of the Prime Minister calling us together at the last moment, prior to his departure, and telling us that we can deal with nothing but the Tariff.

Mr. HUGHES.—I said so.

Mr. CHARLTON.—But the Prime Minister went further. He said that if the House so desired, he could see no reason why it should not deal with other legislation. If the Country party add

their strength to that of the Labour party upon a matter affecting rural districts which honorable members of the Country party deem urgent, what will become of the Government and of the right honorable gentleman's mission if there should be one absentee on the Government side when the division is taken? We all know that old-age pensions ought to be increased. If an honorable member of the Labour party brings forward a motion dealing with these pensions, it is quite possible that he will find support from a majority of honorable members, even from supporters of the Government, and from the party sitting in the corner. In such circumstances, the Government would again be defeated. But it would only be in accordance with the promise of the Prime Minister that, although the Government propose to take no other business during his absence but the Tariff, if the House so desires, it may take up other business.

Mr. HUGHES.—I have said that the policy of the Government was, and is, to submit only one thing to the House, and that is the Tariff.

Mr. CHARLTON.—But the right honorable gentleman went further the following day, and said that he had no objection to the House dealing with other legislation if honorable members desired to do so.

Mr. HUGHES.—I said a lot of things on the following day. I said, "Who am I to prevent people working?" But I know that you do not want to work.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I repudiate that interjection. I want to work.

Mr. HUGHES.—Then you are "black-legging" on your class.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I want to give relief to the old people who are suffering because of the high cost of living. I want to give them something more than they are receiving. Also I want to see that justice is done to those who are paying income tax. We ought not to be taxing married people with incomes of £156 per annum, or single people with incomes of £100 per annum. When we know that, since that legislation was passed, the cost of living has increased by 50 per cent. If we do not deal with the matter this session, we must tax these incomes next year and the following year. Every one knows that this is a burning question, because people

in receipt of £200 per annum, who cannot make ends meet, are being compelled to pay income tax. I mention this for the benefit of the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes), because he does not want to go away in ignorance of what may possibly happen. It is quite possible that this House may decide that legislation should be enacted, irrespective of the Tariff, and if a vote is carried against the Government they will be in the position they occupied last Thursday. I cannot see what justification there is for the Prime Minister to adopt the course he has, because the Leader of the Country party (Dr. Earle Page) has clearly stated that the members of his party are not prepared to grant immunity. Notwithstanding this, the Prime Minister submits a motion that a certain paper be printed. We have already been forewarned concerning the necessity for Australia to be represented at the Imperial Conference, as an intimation to that effect was received last November. The position now is that, five or six months after that invitation was received, we are asked to agree to a motion that "the paper be printed," although it was received last November.

Mr. HUGHES.—The printing of the paper is immaterial; it was the opportunity.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I admit that the printing of the paper is immaterial. The opportunity for what?

Mr. HUGHES.—For this House to declare where it stands.

Mr. CHARLTON.—It is all very well for the Prime Minister to get away from the position he took up last week, when he said that he could not go abroad as the representative of the Commonwealth without immunity from attack. Will the Prime Minister say, if this motion is carried, that it will give him the immunity he desires in face of the reiterated statements of the Leader of the Country party that, whilst they will give his Government reasonable support, they will not grant immunity from attack during his absence? That is my argument. The position is just as it was on Thursday last, and I am putting this forward for the information of the Prime Minister.

Mr. HUGHES.—The position is no different from what it has been during the past fourteen months.

Mr. CHARLTON.—It has not altered since the right honorable gentleman spoke last week.

Mr. MCGRATH.—But there is a difference in the Prime Minister's attitude.

Mr. CHARLTON.—The right honorable gentleman now says that he does not want immunity.

Mr. HUGHES.—I did not say that; but that the position of parties is practically the same as it has been during the last fourteen months.

Mr. CHARLTON.—There have been several changes during the last fourteen months, and the most recent was on the other side of the chamber, when the honorable member for Robertson (Mr. Fleming) joined the Country party. The position is not what it has been during the past fourteen months.

Mr. HUGHES.—Where has one of the honorable member's supporters gone?

Mr. CHARLTON.—The Prime Minister need not be concerned about that, as the honorable member to which he refers will be found voting solidly with the members of my party.

Mr. GREENE.—The Kalgoorlie constituency is now represented by an honorable member on this side.

Mr. CHARLTON.—We are in the same position, so far as the strength of parties is concerned, and I do not see any difference in the position from what it was last week, when the Prime Minister made his statement. I can see the danger of the Prime Minister going abroad and the possibility of the business of the country being taken out of the hands of the Government which he will be representing. I am not particularly concerned about the Prime Minister going to Great Britain, but I am anxious that nothing shall be done to prevent necessary legislation being introduced into this House.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Is the honorable member concerned about Australia being represented at the Imperial Conference?

Mr. CHARLTON.—Yes, and I made my position on that point quite clear last week.

Interruption—

Mr. SPEAKER—Order! I have repeatedly asked honorable members to refrain from interjecting. As soon as one honorable member interjects a chorus of replies by way of interjection

follows, which leads to disorder, and I trust that honorable members will allow the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton) to address the Chair without any further interference.

Mr. CHARLTON.—In reply to the interjection by the honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best), I may state that, on Friday last, I pointed out that, in my opinion, it was necessary for Australia to be represented at the Imperial Conference. On that occasion I mentioned that, in view of the political situation and the statement of the Prime Minister in this House that he was going away, it was his duty to resign, and allow the Governor-General to exhaust the means of government at his disposal. The question would then be whether another Government could be formed with a sufficient majority to enable it to send a representative to Great Britain as early as possible. I have not moved from the position I took up last week. The only change that has taken place is in the attitude of the Government. I have not changed my attitude in the slightest; but the Government has made a right-about turn.

Mr. HUGHES.—The position has not changed, as yet. We shall see when this vote is taken.

Mr. CHARLTON.—That is so. The right honorable gentleman now says that the position has not changed; but that we shall see what support the Government have when this vote is taken, which means that, if it is carried, there will be a vote of confidence in the Government, notwithstanding that the Leader of the Country party has said that his followers are not prepared to grant immunity.

Mr. HUGHES.—It is also fair to say that the Leader of the Country party said that the vote on the motion of adjournment was not intended to be one of lack of confidence, or a means of taking the business out of the hands of the Government.

Mr. BRENNAN.—But the Government took it as one.

Mr. CHARLTON.—The Leader of the Country party said that it was not intended to take the business out of the hands of the Government. We must take the two statements together, that of the Prime Minister that he would not go without immunity, and that of the Leader of the Country party that

his supporters were not prepared to grant immunity. The thing is so clear that we cannot get away from it, and the position has not altered since last Thursday. As I have already stated, there is urgent legislation demanding the attention of this Parliament, but it now appears that nothing will be undertaken, apart from the Tariff, until the Prime Minister returns. I enter my strong protest, and will vote against the motion.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY (Hume) [3.48].—It has been said that the present move is a "climb down" on the part of the Government; but I am not going to say whether that is so or not until a vote is taken, although, up to the present, it appears to be so. The motion submitted by the Prime Minister appears to have a twofold object—to show whether he shall represent the Commonwealth at the Imperial Conference, and whether the motion submitted last Thursday by the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) was intended to take the business out of the hands of the Government. The Prime Minister wants an assurance from the Country party that they did not intend to take the business out of the hands of the Government on that occasion. If the members of the Country party vote for the motion submitted to-day, it will be a clear indication that they did not wish to embarrass the Government on Thursday last, when the honorable member for Grampians moved the adjournment of the House to discuss the question of overseas freights.

Mr. JOWETT.—In opening my speech I said I did not wish to embarrass the Government.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Then, what was it for?

Mr. JOWETT.—To get a reduction in freights, and I mean it still.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—And the honorable member desired the motion to be defeated?

Mr. TUDOR.—It was so much "hot air."

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member for Grampians now admits that his motion was, as the Leader of the Opposition suggests, so much "hot air."

Mr. JOWETT.—My constituents are suffering as the result of excessive freights.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—And so are mine.

Mr. JOWETT.—And the honorable member supported me.

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order!

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—On that occasion I supported the honorable member for Grampians because my constituents are suffering just as much hardship as are those in the district he represents. I thought the honorable member was sincere in submitting the motion.

Mr. JOWETT.—So I was.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—But the honorable member now says he did not wish to embarrass the Government.

Mr. JOWETT.—I said so at the outset.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—How could the honorable member give an instruction to the Government if he did not desire the motion to be carried?

Mr. JOWETT.—It was the only means of having the matter discussed.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I could understand the honorable member desiring to have his motion carried as it was carried last Thursday, since we could not hope to secure in any other way the redress of the grievances of the primary producers. The honorable member now says, however, that he did not desire the motion to be carried.

Mr. JOWETT.—I did desire to get it carried, and it was carried.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The Prime Minister now comes along with a motion in which he practically asks the Country party to say that, by the vote they gave on Thursday last, they did not intend to take the business of the House out of the hands of the Government. He wants them to reverse that vote. If they do, then the climbing down will have been, not by the Government, but by the Country party. Every honorable member is entitled to his own opinion, but my view is that, if the Prime Minister induces the Country party to go back on the vote they gave last Thursday, he will have won. The Country party alone will have climbed down. I am not going to say that they intend to climb down until I see how they vote on this question. The Prime Minister is assuming that everything will be satisfactory from his point of view—that the Country party are going to vote for this motion.

Mr. FENTON.—He has a promise that the majority of them will vote for it.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—No doubt. Judging by the expression on the faces of honorable members of the Country party and the supporters of the Government, an amicable agreement between them was arrived at before they met this afternoon. During the week-end, various statements were made by the Leader of the Country party (Dr. Earle Page) to the effect that his party did not intend to grant immunity to the Government. Such statements are all very well, but they are of no avail unless they are backed up by a vote in this House. It seems to me that members of the Country party have agreed amongst themselves to make the public statement that the Government will not be granted immunity from attack during the Prime Minister's absence, but that in actual practice there shall be no attempt to put them out of office. I know that honorable members of the party desire it to go forth to the country that they are not attached to the Government, but I would remind them that the people will judge them by the votes they give in this House rather than by any statement they may make. It is all very well for the Leader of the Country party to say that they are not going to grant the Government immunity. The vote they give on this question will prove exactly where they stand. By voting for this motion, the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) and those associated with him will simply reverse the vote they recorded here last Thursday, and prove themselves to be in the Prime Minister's bag.

Sir ROBERT BEST (Kooyong) [4.54].—The Opposition members have devoted a considerable amount of attention to the Country party, honorable members of which have properly said that they have enjoyed the advantage of a great deal of advice at their hands. I am prepared, however, to say that the Country party have acted consistently since this unfortunate incident took place.

Mr. JOWETT.—There was nothing unfortunate about it.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—The Country party have stated distinctly that, in voting as they did on Thursday last, it was not their desire to take the business of the House out of the hands of the Government. They repeat that statement

to-day. They have also said from the beginning that they desire that Australia shall be represented at the forthcoming Imperial Conference. When the matter was before the House some days ago, it was conceded by all three parties that it was not only desirable, but vital, that Australia should be represented, and it was also conceded all round that no one could so adequately or capably represent Australia as could the Prime Minister.

Mr. RYAN.—No.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—I do not hesitate to say that there is no man, not merely in this Parliament, but in this country, who, by reason of his experience and knowledge, could so effectively represent Australia at the Imperial Conference as can the Prime Minister. No man coming from Australia could command the power and influence that the Prime Minister does in the Old Country and in the councils of the British Empire. If this be conceded, then why, in the best interests of Australia, should not the Prime Minister be permitted to go? He is entitled to go. He represents the largest of the three parties in this House, and, until Thursday last, his Government had carried on the business of the country without reverse, not only during the whole life of this Parliament, but, with slight alterations in the personnel of the Ministry, for a very considerable period anterior to it. We could have no better guarantee that, having regard to all the interests involved, he is entitled to go to the Conference as our representative.

I intend, however, to appeal to honorable members from another stand-point. The questions to be submitted and dealt with at the Imperial Conference are of the most vital concern to Australia. Nothing could be graver or more serious, for instance, than the question of the naval defence of, not merely the Commonwealth, but the whole Empire. Then, again, could anything be more serious than the question of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty and its renewal? These are two of the chief matters to be dealt with at the Conference, and in regard to each of them the Prime Minister has special knowledge and experience. I submit they are far graver than any local question that could be, in the meantime, submitted to this House. They are of the most far-reaching character, and surely it is the duty of this House to

regard Australia's welfare and interest in so far as they are affected by these questions from an entirely non-party stand-point. The highest duty of the House is that all parties should co-operate in sending the Prime Minister to the Conference, and so securing the very best and most effective representation that the Commonwealth could obtain. From a non-party stand-point, that is the attitude which honorable members should take up. Matters of party intrigue, the reconstruction or resignation of the Government at this critical juncture, and questions of domestic concern, are insignificant compared with the magnitude of the subjects to be dealt with at the Conference. The whole question of Australia's representation is far too important to be trifled with, or to be subordinated to mere party issues. It is far too serious to be dealt with from any other stand-point than that of the interests of Australia. I have had strong differences with the Prime Minister and the Government, but I dare not, and I submit honorable members generally cannot, challenge for one moment the experience and capacity of the right honorable member to represent us at the Conference. I appeal to honorable members to subordinate everything else to the sending to the Old Country of the best man that Australia can send. My honorable friends, the members of the Country party, have most properly said, "Whilst we cannot guarantee to the Government complete immunity from attack during the absence of the Prime Minister—that is rather too big an order to expect from us—we undertake that no advantage will be taken of the Government."

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Oh, no! We do not say that.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—The Country party do not say that.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—They say, "Whilst we cannot guarantee the Government complete immunity from attack, we do undertake that no undue advantage will be taken of them during the Prime Minister's absence in England." That is a legitimate assurance, which the Prime Minister and the Government are justified in accepting, and I am perfectly satisfied from my knowledge of my honorable friends of the Country party, that they will see that Australian interests which are to be discussed at the Imperial Conference are not in any way prejudiced

by anything which may take place in this Chamber. I appeal to honorable members to look at the matter from the Australian point of view, and also from the stand-point of the magnitude of the interests which are involved.

Mr. NICHOLLS (Macquarie) [4.2].—I intend to support the amendment. I wish to express, in as few words as possible, my absolute disapproval of the action of the Government during the past three or four days. When, owing to apathy of the Government, the formal motion for adjournment, submitted by the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett), had been carried, the Prime Minister immediately rose, and in the most indignant manner demanded that the Ministry should be given some assurance by the Country party of immunity from attack during his absence in England, failing which he would have to consider his position. As a matter of fact, he did consider it the whole afternoon, and upon the following morning moved the adjournment of the House in order that he might give further consideration to it, at the same time demanding from the Country party an assurance that in the event of his going to the Imperial Conference they would not harass the Government in any shape or form. He failed to get that assurance, and once more considered his position. Yet he has come into the House this afternoon under exactly similar conditions to those which existed when we adjourned on Friday last, and has told honorable members that he is quite satisfied with the present position. Although he has received from the Country party no assurance of the character he desired, he is quite satisfied to take anything which that party may give him, so long as he is permitted to hang on to office. To my mind there is only one reasonable course for the Government to adopt, namely, to resign. They have neither the confidence of a majority of honorable members of this House nor of a majority of the electors of Australia. Consequently, they are merely intriguing for the purpose of hanging on to office. I know of no other Government which would have the audacity to cling to office as they are doing, if its members had suffered defeat in the way that they have suffered it. If this motion be carried it will not be the Government which will have climbed down—it will be the Country party which will have "caved

in." The Leader of that party stated the other day that under no circumstances would its members "wet-nurse" the Ministry, or give them any definite assurance upon any particular subject. But they had the common decency to say that they would not harass the Government or place any obstacles in the way of the Prime Minister going to the Imperial Conference. Let me read the statement which was made by the Leader of that party at the beginning of this crisis. Upon the afternoon when the motion for the adjournment was carried, he is reported to have made a statement regarding the action of the Country party—

The official attitude of the Country party towards the position was made known by the leader of the party, Mr. E. Page, after the Country party's meeting had ended. He stated that the situation that had arisen had not been caused through any premeditated action by the Country party, but was due to the Government failing to continue the debate upon the motion for the adjournment. Further than this he would not commit himself, but the Country party members as a whole adopted the attitude that they were now simply awaiting developments. The general feeling expressed at their meeting during the evening was that the Government had itself to thank for the muddle in which it found itself, and that it was for the Government to find a way out of the difficulty. On the other hand, it is understood that several members of the Country party would not have been prepared to vote against the Government had they known that a crisis was likely to arise, and that the Ministry's fate would be involved. The motion moved by Mr. Jowett was not intended by the party as an attack upon the Ministry, and at least one of the Country party members admitted that he had not realized the full significance of the division.

When the Leader of the Country party was charged with having made that statement, he promptly denied having made it. But I am prepared to say that if one-half or two-thirds of the party had known that a political crisis would arise if they voted for the formal motion for adjournment, they would not have voted against the Government. Had they not been able to escape in any other way, they would have been absent when the division was taken.

Mr. JOWETT.—They did not vote against the Government. They voted for my motion.

Mr. NICHOLLS.—The honorable member, by his motion, took the business out of the hands of the Government, and that is why all this trouble has

arisen. I know that he and his party are particularly sorry that they did such a cruel and harsh thing to the Government.

Mr. JOWETT.—Nonsense!

Mr. NICHOLLS.—Your action will never be forgotten by the Ministry.

Mr. JOWETT.—I hope that it will not be.

Mr NICHOLLS.—You and your party entered the House this afternoon looking as if you had been beaten for three or four days.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—Order! Will the honorable member address the Chair instead of addressing honorable members direct?

Mr. NICHOLLS.—Yes. The look upon the faces of certain members of the Country party when they entered the chamber this afternoon was most pitiful. To the best of my belief, the members of that party intend to vote with the Government upon this motion. They intend to give the Government a further lease of life. If ever a party has been forced to "climb down" it is the Country party in this Chamber. Their attitude towards this question will be recorded very shortly. The honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best) has stated that they have acted most consistently since their advent in this Chamber. I am prepared to say that they have; there has never been a party which has acted more consistently in its inconsistency than has the Country party. Those honorable members have on each and every occasion, vital and otherwise, "sat on the rails"; they have never taken any definite stand on any particular subject.

To leave the subject of the Country party, I wish to say that my main reason for supporting the amendment is that I do not believe the Prime Minister should go to the Old Country to attend the Imperial Conference. I do not think he will represent the views of the Australian people—I do not think he has any intention to represent their views, neither do I think he represented their views at the Peace Conference. For those reasons I have no desire to see him go Home now. I venture to say there are men in Australia more capable of placing the views of the Australian people before the Conference than the Prime Minister is. There is just a possibility of the Prime

Minister involving Australia in a tremendous expenditure. He is quite capable of misrepresenting the views of Australia. He has never to any degree respected the interests of Australia in the past, and it is not reasonable to expect him to do so in the future. But he is prepared to say that he will do anything provided he is permitted to go to the Conference now. If the vote to be taken will stop his going I shall do my best to induce as many as possible to support the amendment. If the Prime Minister had the slightest sense of dignity he and his Government would immediately resign.

Mr. FLEMING (Robertson) [4.14].—The need for the representation of Australia at the Imperial Conference is agreed on equally by all members of the House. I take it there is not a single individual who does not consider that in the present state of the world's politics it is not only desirable, but essential that Australia's voice should be heard. The position in this House is a very unusual one. My name has been mentioned here to-day as one who has left the Government party for the Country party. I say definitely that there are other members in the House who were elected, just as I was, on the nomination of the Nationalist and Country parties. Under no conditions can the Nationalist Government claim those members as absolute supporters. The members of the Country party owe allegiance to the people who sent them here—to people who expect their representatives to play fair to every country interest—and surely those representatives, having that dual nomination, are always free at any time to give their adherence to the party which they think will do most in the interest of their constituents. The honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best) this afternoon treated us to a eulogy of the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes), and told us that he is the only man who can adequately represent Australia at the Imperial Conference. Is it any wonder, when we hear that sort of talk, that the Prime Minister becomes imbued with the idea that he is the only man fit to represent Australia? I am strongly of opinion that, if possible, an Australian should represent Australia. At the back of that idea there is something that has never been mentioned here, and which, under other circumstances, I should not have mentioned. When we are told that there is only one person fit to

represent Australia, it is time Australia saw the position with more widely-opened eyes. Despite the magnificent efforts of our boys at the Front, there is, as any man who knows the East at all must be aware, a belief in more than one Eastern nation, that Australia will not fight. That belief arose quite naturally from the position which was taken up here whilst the war was on, and the Prime Minister, above all, is responsible for the position. The Prime Minister, who was the most aggressive man in Australia, is now speaking in the most humble way. When he spoke here last week on this question he was "as mild a manned man" as ever addressed this chamber. Those people who have in their minds the idea that Australia will not fight, get it from the attitude which the Prime Minister himself has shown here. In the days when we were not in danger from Eastern quarters he talked in an aggressive way, but in the days when there may be some danger, not from any particular nation, but from the whole of the teeming East, he speaks more mildly than any man before. Australia is not "looking for fight"; Australia's motto, I hold, should always be to defend and not defy. But we must surely make it plain that we men born, as we are, of British parentage, will not crumple up at the first sign of opposition. Australia can easily be better represented at the Imperial Conference than by a man who has taken up the attitude that I have described on the part of the Prime Minister, and who has talked as he did here last week. The Country party has given a definite assurance, and the Prime Minister cannot ask for complete immunity for his Government. What party with any self respect, with any principles or programme—with any consideration for the interests of those who sent them here—could give immunity to any Government?

There are various matters in connexion with the administration of the Government which I propose to speak on at another time, and which are enough to cause any man to consider his position very carefully. The legislative acts of the Government have received the sanction of all on this side of the House, but their administrative acts have met with a great deal of objection, both in this corner and in many places throughout the country. It would be suicidal, it would be worse

than suicidal, for we should be false to our constituents, if we gave the Prime Minister or the Government any immunity during his absence. The Government, like all Governments, must accept full responsibility for the position in which they find themselves.

Mr. LAZZARINI (Werriwa) [4.19].—

I am more convinced than ever as the debate goes on, and as the position develops, that the Government, in desperation, are using the Imperial Conference in order to get out of the awkward position in which they find themselves. During the debate to-day we have had many interjections to the effect that Australia must be represented at the Conference. To that I raise no objection, but I say emphatically that I would rather there should be no representation than that the National Party of Australia should be degraded. It seems to me that the representation of Australia at the Imperial Conference is being used by the Government and the National party as they used the old flag-wagging business in the past, that is, to get themselves on to the Treasury bench, and, being there, to stay there. The further the position develops the more undignified becomes the action of the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes), the Government, and the Nationalist party. The Prime Minister rode the high horse when the first thing happened. Erratic, as he always is, he made several threats of the dire penalties which he was going to hand out to all and sundry if the thing was not rectified at once; but he immediately receded from that position, and comes down now with the very mild and simple motion that a paper should be printed, saying that the vote on that motion is to test whether the Government have the confidence of Parliament. It seems to me that the whole of this action of the Government, undignified as it is, is being forced upon them by the vested interests that they represent. Apparently, it does not matter how undignified they are, or what attitude they take up to discredit themselves in this regard, they must hang on in order that the interests that the Prime Minister represents shall be represented at the Imperial Conference. We are told that nothing else can be brought before this Parliament now but the Tariff. The interests of

Australia, no matter what may arise, have to be sacrificed to the interests of the Prime Minister and his Imperialistic friends. Whatever questions of vital importance may arise during the next few months, it matters not how the interests of Australia may suffer so long as the Prime Minister is in Great Britain with his Imperialistic friends during the sittings of the Imperial Conference, where possibly he may sacrifice Australia's interests as he sacrificed them when he was over there before. It is very unfortunate indeed that Australia should be represented by the Prime Minister at the Imperial Conference, and more unfortunate still that that representation is to be brought about by worse than an indignity being heaped upon this National Parliament.

In conclusion, I wish to make reference to the interjection in which the Prime Minister told the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton) that if he wanted work he was "black-legging" on his class. Those are the interjections that cause Parliament to be ridiculed outside. Of course, they tell us now that that was a joke, like the vote which the Farmers' party brought about the other day; but these undignified interjections, making Parliament a laughing-stock, come from the gentleman who holds the highest position in the House. They are the drops of water that are gradually wearing away the stone. The Prime Minister sometimes becomes very indignant when the newspapers criticise Parliament and speak contemptuously of it, but interjections of that sort, particularly when they come from the Prime Minister, are inviting that sort of thing. If we are going to have parties here like the Farmers' party, which will give a vote on one day and eat it the next, and like the Nationalist party and Nationalist Government, which will be defeated and hang on to office in spite of their defeat, then we are fast coming to a time when we must have some other method than the parliamentary system for solving our national problems.

I am opposed to the printing of the paper because it is an unnecessary cost and useless for the purpose for which it has been moved, and because, so far as Parliament and the country are con-

cerned, whether the motion is carried or not, the Government will be still an undignified one hanging on to office in spite of any and every vote.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (Maranoa) [4.25].—The paper laid on the table this afternoon, and the resolutions passed by the Nationalist party as to what they intend to do in the future, are most amusing to me. I wish first to speak seriously to the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett). In the first place, he moved the adjournment of the House to draw attention to the excessive rates of freight, both on the coast and overseas.

Mr. ATKINSON.—Only overseas.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—That was quite enough, too. In moving the adjournment of the House, the honorable member for Grampians questioned the Commonwealth Line of Steamers—

Mr. JOWETT.—I never referred to it once.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—That makes it all the worse. I am glad that the honorable member has made that interjection, and that the Minister for Home and Territories (Mr. Poynton) confirms it, because there is no doubt in my mind, or in the mind of any other member of the House, except those who are supporting the Government, and blind supporters of the Government at that, that the Commonwealth Line of Steamers is in the Combine.

Mr. JOWETT.—I think there is no doubt about that.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—There the honorable member is again! He blows hot one minute and extremely cold the next.

Mr. JOWETT.—Not at all. It is only a question of fact.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—If there was no fight in the honorable member's motion, what did he move it for?

Mr. JOWETT.—In order to ventilate a question of great public importance, namely, the excessive rates of ocean freights.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—It was of such public importance that it has caused a crisis in the Federal Parliament during a whole week. That shows how very important it was.

Mr. POYNTON.—You did not have freights in your eye when the honorable member for Grampians moved the motion, or when you called for a division on it.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—As to the motion which the Prime Minister asks the House to pass to-day, all I have to say is that if the Country party vote for the second clause, they are not made of the stuff that I think they are made of.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—How can they vote for it?

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—How can they vote for it? Because the country knows, and every man in the House knows, that the Country party is the tail of the Nationalist party. At the election, their slogan was "Anti-Labour" all the time. They said, "We claim all the anti-Labour votes," and they got them.

Mr. FENTON.—Not in every case.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—In the majority of cases they did.

Mr. JOWETT.—Settle it among yourselves.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—The day of judgment is not far off for the honorable member for Grampians. He is the cause of all this "rumpus." He moved the motion, and admitted afterwards, and still admits, that he did not know the gun was loaded.

Mr. JOWETT.—No; that is your statement.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—He has already told the Prime Minister so, and the Prime Minister told the House on Friday last.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—But it was your picture that got into the illustrated press!

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I shall deal with the picture business afterwards. "Every picture tells a story"—honorable members all know the advertisement of Doan's backache cure. The honorable member is suffering from backache to-day. The honorable member did not know that his gun was loaded, but he could not run away from his own motion when the Opposition called for a division.

Mr. JOWETT.—So you say. I had no desire to do so.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—If he had run away he would have been politically dead for ever and ever, amen.

Mr. JOWETT.—I voted for the motion because I was in favour of it.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—If the honorable member understood parliamentary procedure, he would have known that if such a motion is carried the business is taken out of the hands of the Government.

Mr. JOWETT.—I know that quite well.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—And when that is done, what is the consequence?

Mr. JOWETT.—What has been the consequence?

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—We are waiting for the result; but if the members of the Country party vote for the second motion submitted by the Prime Minister to-day they are a lot of political mongrels.

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! That remark is a gross reflection upon honorable members, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—If it is offensive, I withdraw it.

Mr. STEWART.—It is most offensive.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I do not wish to be personally offensive to any honorable member; but the matter that is now before us means life or death to the Government.

Mr. POYNTON.—It is a case of the ins and the outs.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—What is the duty of the Opposition but to pull the Government from the Treasury bench at the first opportunity. While I am Whip of my party, I shall take advantage of every opportunity to catch the Government napping. Last Thursday was not the first occasion on which I have done that, and I hope it will not be the last. The second motion submitted by the Prime Minister is a whitewashing proposal, and I have heard it whispered in the lobbies, and pretty loudly, that three or four members of the Country party will be conveniently absent if the Government are challenged while the Prime Minister is in England. I could mention the names of those honorable members.

Mr. FLEMING.—Let us have the names.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I shall wait to see how events turn out, and, if necessary, I shall disclose the names when the occasion arises.

Mr. GIBSON.—Cannot you let me have the names now? They would be of great interest to me.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—The information would do the honorable member no good, for it would only reveal to him how shallow is human nature, particularly in the case of some gentlemen in whose integrity he has the greatest faith. But I have not the slightest doubt that the Prime Minister has been given the tip;

otherwise he would not have acted as he has done to-day. As the honorable member for Robertson (Mr. Fleming) said, he is as mild as a sucking dove. Compare the Prime Minister now with the Prime Minister three years ago, who used to come to the House in a truculent mood and try to flog us to perdition. But many of those who were members then are still in this House, and I hope that we shall return with an interesting majority after the next election. It has been suggested that the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) has a secret understanding with the Prime Minister. It will be remembered that recently a conference of the Farmers and Settlers Associations and the Country parties of the different States was held in Sydney. At that time the honorable member for Franklin (Mr. McWilliams) was Leader of the Federal Country party, and in a press interview he stated the objects and intentions of his party, particularly in regard to matters that would be brought forward on the re-assembling of this Parliament. The interviewer pointedly asked the honorable member, "Are the whole of your party in favour of that policy?" and the honorable member replied, "I cannot answer for the party. We decide things in the party room, but when members go into the House they are free to vote as they choose." That is the position in a nutshell. Honorable members in the corner are not a party at all; they are only a rabble.

Mr. JOWETT.—Are we to infer from the honorable member's remarks that members of his party are not free to vote as they like?

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I ask the honorable member to give notice of that question. He is the one man in this Parliament upon whom the eyes of all Australia are fixed to-day. That is why the Governor-General has returned to Melbourne from Sydney; he wants to know what the honorable member intends to do. The honorable member voted on Thursday last to turn the Government out of office, and we shall be interested to see what he will do to-day. But the Prime Minister seems to be very sure of his ground. I have been in Parliament with him for many years, and I have learned from him a lot of what I know of political tactics, but I tell him that the Government may claim immunity from

attack only when they are in recess. No one knows that better than does the Leader of the Government, and, knowing him as I do, I cannot for the life of me understand why he convened Parliament three weeks ago instead of continuing the recess as long as he possibly could. I warn him that unless he has honorable members of the Country party in his pocket they will "sell him a pup" at the earliest opportunity.

In regard to the Imperial Conference, I agree with many honorable members on both sides of the House. The forthcoming gathering of Empire statesmen will be the most momentous for Australia that has ever been held. I have been fighting for the White Australia policy ever since I have been in active politics, and that is nearly forty years. The honorable member for Robertson (Mr. Fleming) said that the Prime Minister, not being an Australian, could not represent Australia. I am not an Australian born, but I take second place to no man in my loyalty to this country. My home is here, my interests are here, and my family are Australian, and I would die for Australia.

Mr. FLEMING.—Those who were born here understand Australia better than others.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I understand Australian sentiment, and I think the Prime Minister does, too. I say emphatically that it would be a crime if Australia were not represented at the Imperial Conference. Our whole national life may depend upon what takes place at that Conference. That is why I am in favour of some man from Australia representing us there. I am quite at a loss to understand the attitude of members of the Country party. If they vote for the motion submitted to-day by the Prime Minister, they will make it clear that he knew what was in their minds when he said that a number of them did not know what they were voting for on Thursday last, and that they did not know that the "gun was loaded." Perhaps some of them will be able to explain their position, and particularly the honorable member for Grampians, whom I cannot forget in connexion with the present position. I ask the Prime Minister now to say whether he honestly believes that the honorable member for Grampians did not, on Thursday last, know that the "gun was loaded"? No reply.

Mr. HUGHES.—Questions at this stage are disorderly.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Then I might ask the right honorable gentleman to repeat now the reference he made to the Sphinx the other day. It is clear that he can be a sphinx when it suits him. The honorable member for Grampians will surely not tell me that when the vote was taken on Thursday last, on his motion for the adjournment of the House, he did not know what he was voting for.

Mr. JOWETT.—I knew exactly what I was voting for, and, on a similar motion, I would vote again in the same way.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—How will the honorable member vote on the motion now before the House?

Mr. JOWETT.—That is another question altogether. This is not a question dealing with ocean freights.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—Order! I suggest to the honorable member for Grampians that, if he finds he cannot refrain from interjecting, he had better retire temporarily from the Chamber.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—The Prime Minister is, to-day, giving honorable members an opportunity of registering a vote on two points—Whether the House is desirous that the Government should not regard the vote on Thursday as one intended to take the business of the House out of its hands; and whether it wishes the Prime Minister to represent Australia at the Imperial Conference. If the honorable member for Grampians did mean what he said, he is the greatest conjurer with words I have ever heard of. I have always believed that the honorable member was serious, but we are now told that his motion was merely by-play to ventilate something. Honorable members will recollect that I told them on Thursday, long before the vote was taken on the motion, that members of the Country party would not vote for it. I did not dream that a vote would be taken on the motion. I assumed that honorable members opposite, if not of the Country party, then of the Nationalist party, would have sufficient nous to talk the motion out. If I had been sitting on the Nationalist side, certainly no vote on it would have been taken.

Mr. HUGHES.—If I had been here there would have been no vote taken on it.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I can quite believe that. In conclusion, I say that if the members of the Country party are true to their statements and to the vote they recorded on Thursday last, it will not be possible for them to reverse that vote to-day.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [4.45].—I am pledged to vote against the Government on each and every opportunity, and I shall do so. I have sincerely welcomed the members of the Country party to this House, because I recognise that, usually, the members of a new party are more honest and more steadfast than others in their pledges to their constituents, and more determined to carry them out. According to an old proverb, little dogs just leaving their mothers may expect to meet a lot of cuffs and kicks in going through the world. The Country party has had its first rebuff and, probably, as long as they live, members of that party will, in future, know that once a motion is lodged in this House, and carried to a vote, it may turn out to be a loaded gun, and its explosion be fraught with dire consequences.

The honorable member for Robertson (Mr. Fleming) spoke of the East, and referred to the idea amongst certain nations that Australians will not fight. The honorable member will agree that Australians have emblazoned their name with a noble record on the firmament of war, and no nation can now have any doubt that if the cry of Australia is raised Australians will fight. A sense of bashfulness, and not the colour of the cover of the volume, forbids me quoting at length from a book which I have here, because I was one who supplied some notes for it. In 1905 I became converted to a view I did not hold previously. When I saw the mighty millions of the East living in good health under conditions under which Europeans could not possibly exist; and when I recognised the genius of the nation which was then fighting Russia, I came to the conclusion that if the East were led by that nation the world would be at its feet. I have always taken up the position that, if I had been born an Eastern, whether in China or Japan, I should have but one motto, and that would be, "Death to the white races." Our record in the East

would deserve that, if the white races who injured the Eastern people were to be punished for what they did. Following up the remarks made by the honorable member for Robertson, I shall make a quotation from page 54 of this volume, from a statement made by Baron Katsura, at a time when there was an idea that the East would be led by Japan.

Mr. FLEMING.—I was not speaking only of Japan by any means.

Dr. MALONEY.—I quite understand that the honorable member was referring to China, India, and other Eastern nations. I have no desire to misrepresent him. Baron Katsura said—

Whether or not it is the destiny of Japan to be leader of the East remains to be unfolded, but if ever that responsibility shall be hers, there is one thing of which the world may be sure, and that is, that she will not willingly retrace her steps, and she will, at least, endeavour to persuade the East to do what she has done herself, and more perfectly.

I will make one other quotation, from memory, of a statement made by the general who led the Japanese against the Chinese and conquered them. He said that in the middle of the century in which we now are, Japan would be fighting Europe for the domination of the world. I recognise what Japan has done for Australia. I appreciate it, and pay that country reverence for it. My belief is that, had Japan been joined to Germany, the members of this Parliament might to-day be speaking in Japanese or German. Japan was a loyal ally, but, as I said in my book, when I thought of the East in conflict with the West, I hope should such a conflict come, that the European nations and the great United States of America will then be united, Great Britain leading the Anglo-Saxon races, Germany the Teutons, France the Latins, supported by Italy and Spain, and Russia, whose territories touch the frontiers of the Eastern nations, the Slavs. At that time we never dreamed that the terrible war through which we have just passed would take place. As I said then, we have one great friend in America, who to-day stands sentinel between us and the East. The words uttered by Admiral Sperry in New Zealand should be taught throughout Australia. He said, "You have no reason to fear while the Stars and Stripes float on the oceans of the world." We reciprocate that offer of assistance. Were

the offer made to me of a treaty with Japan against the wish of America, I would say "No." Our greatest hope is in that immense nation whose people speak our tongue. As to the choosing of a representative of Australia at the Peace Conference, the Senate, of course, would be all but unanimous in voting for the Prime Minister, and, although I have fought the right honorable gentleman year after year, and would like to kill him politically, I do not think any one man would have a chance of beating him if a similar selection were made by this House.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Would you vote for him?

Dr. MALONEY.—If the choice were between a gentleman who represents the void and the Prime Minister, I would vote for the latter, because, with all his faults he has courage, and that I do not think the other man has.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—What about sending Jowett?

Dr. MALONEY.—His company is too pleasant to lose. If I might make a suggestion to the Country party, it is this, a gift bestowed grudgingly is never welcomed. If you are going to support the Government, do it thoroughly; do not take half and half measures. Do one thing or the other. Some members speak like lions and act like cats. This is a turning point in the history of Australia. I firmly believe that the colour that dominates this continent will ultimately rule the world, and I want to hand Australia down to the white races as a legacy for ever. We must be represented at the forthcoming Conference. If it were possible to send a representative from each of the three parties in the House, together with the honorable member for Barrier (Mr. Considine), the independent member whose party is absolutely unanimous, and if the Prime Minister led that representation of four, he would be so supported that Europe would know that Australia is for the White Australia policy for all time. The tone adopted need not convey the slightest insult to that country which helped us so much during the war. I shall on another occasion quote the greatest letter ever penned by the hand of man, or ever framed in the brain of man; that of the great philosopher Herbert Spencer. It is the only letter that was ever acted upon by a nation. When he was appealed to by

Japan to say how that country could best avoid entangling alliances so as not to quarrel with the white races, he replied, "Do not part with any of your land. Give no rights to foreigners in coasting vessels, no rights on the railways, and no mining rights." He concluded his letter by saying that, as his years were many, he must be nearing the end of them, and therefore asked that his letter might not be published until he had passed away. The *Times*, of London, printed a criticism of Herbert Spencer that was as infamous as the brain that conceived it. Japan paid the greatest honour to our race and language in asking our greatest philosopher to advise her. If we follow her example, there will be no trouble. Japan, as the Prime Minister has truly said, will not allow any foreigner to own her land. She goes further. As the right honorable gentleman said, she actually returned to China Chinese labourers who had been sent to Japan. I believe that, excluding religious concessions, no European owns an acre of land in Japan. Could we not approach that country with the word "reciprocity," which is held sacred in the mind of the Eastern, and has been handed down by that great Oriental philosopher Confucius, and say, "You cannot blame us if we follow your splendid example in taking the advice of our greatest philosopher, Herbert Spencer. You would like to come to Australia. Our territory is exactly 11.4 times the size of yours. For every Australian who owns an acre in Japan we shall be willing for a Japanese to own eleven times as much in Australia; as your population is 11.4 times the size of ours, for every Australian who visits your country we will gladly allow eleven Japanese to visit us." As imitation is the sincerest flattery, we could not be accused of rudeness if we said "We are willing to follow your splendid example." That is the White Australia policy in one sentence. I have no doubt how the vote will go.

Mr. RYAN.—How will it go?

Dr. MALONEY.—I think that the country members will vote like lions for the motion. Can you expect anything else in the present state of things, when this created thing that we call Parliament has made itself more powerful than

its creator, the people outside? Is it any wonder that party government prevails?

Mr. LAVELLE.—Give us a referendum.

Dr. MALONEY.—We want it, and the recall. The Nationalist party has accepted that, lock, stock, and barrel. The members of my own party have accepted two-thirds of my programme. The Government of Victoria have accepted the whole of it. The Australian Natives' Association, the strongest friendly society in Australia, has carried the referendum, initiative and recall.

Mr. LAVELLE.—Did not this House do that?

Dr. MALONEY.—Thanks to the astuteness of the honorable member for Capricornia (Mr. Higgs), to whom I again acknowledge my obligation, this House did so unanimously. I have no doubt how the present vote will go, and I again advise the members of the Country party not to "shilly-shally." Their actions should accord with their votes. When you make an offer to the Government, do not draw it back again. Give with a heart and a half. If you are going to support them, do so, and vote straight.

Mr. RYAN (West Sydney) [5.2].—The honorable member for Melbourne (Dr. Maloney) seems fairly confident as to the result of the division; I am not satisfied that he is correct, though, as the Prime Minister has brought this motion forward, I do not doubt that the right honorable gentleman has received very considerable assurances that all will be right. I should like to have a clear understanding of the attitude of the members of the Country party. These occurrences are likely to become the subject of discussion upon the public platform, and to be mentioned during electoral campaigns. It is well, therefore, that we should at least understand the views of each other, and that there should be no mistaking where we stand and our reasons for standing where we do. I was once, in another Parliament, quoting the speech of a member when he interrupted with the question "How did I vote?" and on looking up the division list I found that his vote had been directly contrary to his speech. If the Prime Minister is justified in his expectation of a favorable division, some of the members of the Country party will

vote contrary to their speeches. The motion is not illuminative. It orders the printing of a paper. I have not seen that paper, nor, I think, have other honorable members; and I was reminded a few minutes ago by the honorable member for Batman (Mr. Brennan) that considerable misunderstandings sometimes arise through not having papers properly authenticated. An instance of the kind occurred within the last forty-eight hours, quite a sensation being occasioned by the receipt in Bendigo of a document expressing the intentions of the Prime Minister which was not properly authenticated. I hope, therefore, that the right honorable gentleman, if he can do so, will be good enough to let us have a copy of the invitation to attend a Conference in June, of which he has told us. Personally, I should like to see it. To my mind, two parties have backed down since the House adjourned last week. The Prime Minister has obviously backed down from the attitude which he adopted in this chamber, because he definitely stated then, in as plain language as he is capable of using—which is saying a good deal—that he required an assurance of immunity from the Country party.

Mr. HUGHES.—No, I did not; the honorable member is wrong.

Mr. RYAN.—Then, may I inquire, what did the right honorable gentleman ask?

Mr. HUGHES.—When the honorable member for Cowper (Dr. Earle Page) was speaking he used these words, “You want to bludgeon out of us an assurance of complete immunity.” And my interjection was—as honorable members will see from *Hansard*—“You are quite wrong.”

Mr. RYAN.—Yes, I agree that the Prime Minister was quite wrong in endeavouring to bludgeon immunity from the Country party.

Mr. HUGHES.—I meant that the Leader of the Country party was quite wrong in entertaining any such suggestion.

Mr. RYAN.—I am going upon published reports of a public statement made in this House by the Prime Minister. Am I to take it now that he does not want immunity?

Mr. HUGHES.—I did not say that.

Mr. RYAN.—The right honorable gentleman either wants immunity or he does not; but this much is certain, namely, that this House and the country understood that the Prime Minister was asking for—I will not say “bludgeoning”—an assurance from the Country party that his Government would be given immunity from serious attack during his absence in the Old Country. And I understand that the Prime Minister is still asking for that. Indeed, I am quite sure that he would not leave these shores unless he had secured a guarantee in that direction. Whether it will have been given in this House or not, the right honorable gentleman will have had a private negotiation, before going on board ship, which will have led him to the conclusion that the Government will be quite safe.

Mr. HUGHES.—I refer the honorable member to what I have said. I am satisfied with the assurance which has been given by the honorable member for Cowper.

Mr. RYAN.—And I am satisfied with it, too. I am satisfied that the Leader of the Country party, on behalf of its members, has no intention of embarrassing the Government during the absence of the Prime Minister, and that he intends to give, or has privately given, a guarantee of immunity.

Mr. STEWART.—No!

Mr. RYAN.—The Prime Minister clearly gave this House and the country to understand that he desired immunity from honorable members in the corner; and the latter clearly and emphatically refused to give an assurance of such immunity. Now we have before the House a formal motion, in regard to which the Prime Minister says that if it is carried he will take it as an assurance that he can go with safety to the Imperial Conference, and also as an assurance that this House desires that he should be the representative of Australia there. That amounts to a complete climb-down from the position which the right honorable gentleman took up last week. He had an air of confidence about him when he spoke in this chamber then. He strutted into a difficulty, and has now crawled out of it, not for the sake of physical exercise, but from political necessity. The honorable member for Cowper has had

some conversations, I take it, with the Prime Minister since the House adjourned last week. I may be wrong in coming to that conclusion, but I repeat that, outside this chamber, and between the moment of the adjournment last week and the time when you, Mr. Speaker, took the chair to-day, conversations occurred between representatives of the Country party and of the Government with respect to the situation that has arisen. I can be told by interjection whether that is true or not, but that is the conclusion at which I have arrived. I repeat it. Between the date of our departure from these precincts last Friday and the hour of meeting to-day, honorable members sitting opposite, belonging to the two parties, learned exactly how they were to vote on the motion which has been moved by the Prime Minister. Since no assurance has been given in this House, openly, that the Prime Minister will be granted immunity during his absence, the impression will go out—and justifiably, too—that some secret understanding has been arrived at, a kind of *rapprochement* between the two parties, whereby the Prime Minister will not be disturbed during his absence. It is due to this House and to the country that some representatives of the Corner party should state whether or not that is true.

Dr. EARLE PAGE.—There is no secret understanding whatsoever.

Mr. RYAN.—Then, may I ask the honorable member, through you, Mr. Speaker, whether any discussions have taken place, since the adjournment of the House on Friday, between honorable members of the Corner and members of the Government?

Honorable members interjecting,

Mr. RYAN.—That, I take it from the general tone of the response, is admitted. It is due, then, to honorable members and to the public that they should know exactly what those discussions upon a public matter were, or what was the nature of them. I suppose that in a few minutes we shall witness the sorry spectacle of the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) and those other honorable members associated with him, actually voting to impress the Prime Minister that they do not wish that the Government shall regard Thursday's vote as having been intended to take the conduct of business out of the hands of the Government.

Mr. HUGHES.—The honorable member for Grampians will only be doing, in such event, exactly what he did on Thursday. He stated that his motion for adjournment was not to be regarded as reflecting upon the Government in the remotest degree.

Mr. RYAN.—Then, why all this fuss? Responsibility is thrust on the Prime Minister, in the circumstances which he now sets out, of having wasted the time of this House and the country between then and now; that is, if he says the position is the same to-day as it was when Thursday's vote was taken. However, I differ from the Prime Minister in this regard: If the honorable member for Grampians did not know on Thursday what he was doing—

Mr. JOWETT.—I did know, and I know now what I am doing.

Mr. RYAN.—Then, if the honorable member did know, he voted to take business out of the hands of the Government.

Mr. JOWETT.—I did not. I voted for my own motion.

Mr. RYAN.—Perhaps the honorable member will admit that the carrying of his motion did take the business out of the hands of the Government.

Mr. JOWETT.—No; I do not agree with that.

Interruption.

Mr. RYAN.—It appears to be quite impossible to conduct a serious discussion with the honorable gentleman. Every individual who has come to the use of reason—which usually arrives at or about the age of seven—will know that when a private member moves and carries a motion, “That the House do adjourn”—such motion not having been moved by the Government—the effect is to take the business out of the Government's hands. Everybody knows that the honorable member for Grampians moved the motion of adjournment, and that the motion was carried.

Mr. JOWETT.—Quite right, I did; it was.

Mr. RYAN.—Therefore, the honorable member's motion did take the business out of the hands of the Government. The honorable member says he knew what he was doing. Well, if he did know what he was doing, he must have known that he was taking the conduct of business out of the hands of the Government.

Mr. JOWETT.—I did know what I was doing, and I intended to do it.

Mr. RYAN.—I know that the honorable member knew. I know that he would not have made the great financial success which he has in his business career if he did not know what he was doing. He is not one of those who does not know, and I am merely trying now to persuade him that, since he did know what he was doing, he did intend to take, and did succeed in taking, the business out of the hands of the Government.

Mr. JOWETT.—I did not do that.

Mr. RYAN.—What I want to know is this—and I ask the honorable member if he will tell me on behalf of his party—

Mr. JOWETT.—I speak for myself.

Mr. RYAN.—Then, on behalf of himself, in view of the fact that the honorable member knew what he was doing, will he tell me how he intends to vote on the motion of the Prime Minister to-day? The right honorable gentleman has moved for the printing of a certain paper in order, as he says, to afford honorable members an opportunity of expressing and registering their opinions by a vote—and that is definite enough—on two points. The first of these is whether it is considered desirable that the Government should not regard the vote of Thursday last as one intended to take the business of the House out of the hands of the Government. That also is definite enough.

Mr. JOWETT.—It certainly is definite.

Mr. RYAN.—I am glad it so impresses the honorable member; and now may I ask again, does he intend to say that he is desirous that the Government should not regard Thursday's vote as having been intended to take the business out of their hands?

Mr. JOWETT.—My motion was obviously never so intended, but to draw attention to a matter of urgent public importance.

Mr. RYAN.—If it was the purpose of the honorable member merely to draw attention to a matter of urgent public importance, he should have known, with his long experience, that the practice in such circumstances is not to press one's motion to a division, but to ask leave to withdraw it.

Mr. JOWETT.—I do not agree with that at all.

Mr. RYAN.—It is the practice of the House of Commons, if the honorable member does not know that.

Mr. JOWETT.—Then it is quite time the practice was altered, both in the House of Commons and here.

Mr. RYAN.—It has been altered in this House. It was altered here on Thursday last.

Mr. JOWETT.—And a good thing it was.

Mr. RYAN.—I hope the practice thus established will be continued.

Mr. JOWETT.—I am with the honorable member there.

Mr. RYAN.—And that the honorable member will know, for the future, when he moves a motion, and presses it to a division, which is carried against the Government, that he is doing something which can only have the effect of taking the business of the House out of the hands of the Government.

Mr. JOWETT.—I am prepared to take full responsibility for what I did on Thursday.

Mr. RYAN.—If the honorable member is so prepared, and his party, as a party, is similarly prepared, he and they must vote against the motion of the Prime Minister.

Mr. JOWETT.—Not at all.

Mr. RYAN.—They must do so to be consistent. If they do not, then it is no personal consideration of mine. I have nothing but the most friendly feelings for the honorable member for Grampians, and would be sorry to know that anything had happened to him of a damaging nature—other than that he should lose his seat in this House—but, if his constituents truly appreciate the situation, they will know what they should do. They will perceive that his action in voting in support of the Prime Minister's motion will be—just as in regard to the votes cast by the honorable member's colleagues in the corner—a direct retraction of what he and they did last Thursday; for which he and they will be branded as insincere, not truly representing his and their constituents, but a mere appendage to the Government. If we cast our eyes over the divisions that have been taken in this House since members of the Country party were returned as a party at the last election, we shall find that on every occasion when the life of the Government was at stake the votes of the members of the Country party saved it.

Mr. CORSER.—That showed their common sense.

Mr. RYAN.—My honorable friend from Wide Bay may say that. I am only concerned with showing that honorable members on the Ministerial side are one and the same party. I am not after their votes. I am after their seats in the interests of the farmers themselves, and therefore I want the electors of the Commonwealth to thoroughly understand the nature of this party, and know whom they are voting for when they cast their votes for our honorable friends in the corner. Of course, I may be deceived as to how they are going to vote on this motion. They may vote against the Government, so I keep an open mind on the subject; but if, when the division bells ring, they cast their votes for the motion submitted by the Prime Minister, they will stand condemned in the eyes of the people of this country.

Mr. JOWETT (Grampians) [5.22].—I have no desire to prolong this debate, which concerns a matter of urgent importance to the people of Australia and the Empire, but my name has been so frequently intruded into it by honorable members of both sides that I am afraid silence on my part now might be misconstrued. I regret, indeed, the necessity for my attendance here to-day. I should have been in another State for urgent private reasons, but I felt that my absence from this Chamber while this subject was under discussion might be misunderstood and misrepresented. Remarks which I have heard this afternoon confirm me in this belief. It will be recalled that on Thursday last, after having given you, sir, due notice and also, as courtesy demanded, the Government, I submitted a motion for the adjournment of the House for the purpose of considering a matter of urgent public importance, namely the excessive rates of ocean freights charged on Australia's exportable products.

Mr. BRENNAN.—Will you repeat your arguments now?

Mr. JOWETT.—Some other time I shall be pleased to engage in conversation with my honorable and learned friend, the member for Batman. But now is not the moment. I adopted that procedure because I felt that it presented the best opportunity of drawing attention to the extreme disabilities under which our producers, and those dependent upon them, are labouring owing to the exces-

sive ocean freights now ruling. I knew of no other method by which my purpose could be served. That was the means frequently used in this House, hitherto, and I have no doubt that it will be the means frequently to be adopted in the future. I have heard nothing, in the course of the debate during the last few days, to dissuade me from pursuing the same course on future occasions when I may consider it my duty, in the interests of the people, to direct attention to some matter of urgent public importance. My purpose was not, as has been suggested by people with sinister motives—

Mr. RYAN.—Are you reflecting on honorable members?

Mr. JOWETT.—I am not reflecting on any honorable member of this House. Could it be conceived that any member of this Chamber should impute such a motive to any other honorable member? The only object of my motion was, as stated, to call attention to a matter of urgent public importance. It was not intended to reflect in any way upon the Government, because I do not hold the Government responsible for what has taken place.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Then why did you introduce the motion?

Mr. JOWETT.—Because it was the only method I knew of to direct attention to an urgent matter, and it is the well recognised method of this House.

Mr. MCGRATH.—What good did you hope to do by the motion?

Mr. JOWETT.—I hoped to do a great deal of good, and I may tell the honorable member for Ballarat, in whose constituency a large number of people are gravely oppressed by the excessive ocean freights, that the debate upon my motion last Thursday has done an enormous amount of good. I have nothing to regret and nothing to recant.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—You held the Government responsible for the position?

Mr. JOWETT.—I did not. I stated last Thursday that I had no desire to reflect in any way upon the Government in the matter of ocean freights. How, then, in the name of common sense, could such a meaning be construed into my motion? How could it be regarded as one of want of confidence in the Government? My honorable friends have twitted me with my previous experience and career before entering this House.

Mr. RYAN.—Who twitted you?

Mr. JOWETT.—The honorable member himself did.

Mr. RYAN.—No: I congratulated you upon your career.

Mr. JOWETT.—Then I thank the honorable member for his congratulation as well as the generous manner in which he referred to my previous experience; but I may say that during my business life I have been accustomed to a plain meaning being attached to plain language, and I must confess that I am astonished at what has taken place since the vote on my motion. I realized that if the motion were carried it would necessarily involve the adjournment of the House.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Did all the members of your party know what they were voting for?

Mr. JOWETT.—I am here to speak for myself, not for members of my party. They are able to speak for themselves. I repeat that I realized that the carrying of my motion involved the adjournment of the House.

Mr. RYAN.—Of course it did. You knew that last Thursday.

Mr. JOWETT.—I did, and the motion was carried partly because I voted for it, and partly because other members, including my honorable friends opposite, voted for it; but, curiously enough, they seem to be very angry at the outcome. I am surprised at this avalanche of talking, which has been entirely misdirected, and that honorable members, one after another, have taken for granted what obviously was not a fact. I trust I am not exceeding the privilege of parliamentary language when I say that I give honorable members opposite credit for persuading themselves that what they have alleged was a fact, but I am equally certain they have not persuaded the people of Australia to their view. The people, as most honorable members will admit, know that my motion was intended purely, as stated, for the purpose of calling attention to a matter of urgent public importance, and not to indicate any want of confidence in the Government.

Mr. CHARLTON.—But it had that effect.

Mr. JOWETT.—That is a pure invention, about which some honorable members of this House have been able to deceive themselves.

Mr. MAHONY.—That is rough on the Prime Minister.

Mr. JOWETT.—It was not intended as a motion of want of confidence, though its adoption involved the adjournment of the House.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Do you not realize that to take the business out of the hands of the Government is a vote of want of confidence?

Mr. JOWETT.—I do not believe it. If I were asked for my opinion—

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Well; you know now.

Mr. JOWETT.—I do not. If I were asked for my opinion, I would say that it is preposterous nonsense to suggest that the carrying of such a motion implied want of confidence in the Government. It may be regarded as such according to precedents of this House and precedents of the House of Commons. I do not know. There are some members who "scorn delights and live laborious days" reading ancient volumes dealing with precedents and procedure; but, if they believe that the carrying of such a motion as mine implied want of confidence in the Government, then it is high time such precedents were discarded. Any such suggestion makes no impression upon me. I did not intend my motion as one of want of confidence in the Government, and I am equally certain that not one person in 10,000 in Australia holds that view. But it has pleased some people, for their own ends, to try to persuade the public that it was intended as a motion of want of confidence; and we hear this view repeated as parrots repeat with damnable reiteration some stupid cry. I am satisfied, however, that it will make no impression upon the people of Australia.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—You merely wanted a holiday after your effort.

Mr. JOWETT.—After the strenuous life which some of my honorable friends have been leading lately, no doubt they desired a holiday.

Mr. CHARLTON.—If all that the honorable member contends is correct, it was his obvious duty to vote with the Government on the division which was taken upon his own motion.

Mr. JOWETT.—Not at all. There are, apparently, many honorable members who do not care how these ocean freights are crushing the producing industries. I brought forward my motion

because I believed that it was a matter of urgent public importance, and as such it has been regarded by the whole of the people of Australia. I have no regrets concerning it. I am glad it was presented to a division. I thank the honorable member for Maranoa (Mr. James Page) for having called for a vote. I am glad that I voted for it. I am glad that the honorable members of the Country party supported me. But I do not admit that the motion should have, by the remotest stretch of imagination, been construed as it was by some into a motion of want of confidence in the Government.

Mr. RYAN.—Why did the Prime Minister accept it in that way?

Mr. JOWETT.—That question should be properly addressed to the Prime Minister.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [5.37]. — The honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) has laid down an entirely new doctrine of government. He wants government by minority, which would be all right if the Labour party were in power, but whilst we are sitting in Opposition we will stand for government by majority. Of course, the Farmers party will vote for the Government to-day. They must support the Prime Minister, that marvellous man who pleased every one by the great speech he made upon the necessity for his presence at the Imperial Conference. The Japanese were pleased with it. They saw in him an ally. They laud him to the skies for his marvellous diplomatic speech. The British Government were pleased at his marvellous diplomatic speech. The Tory press, their followers, were pleased. The Yanks were also pleased. What a marvellous man the Prime Minister is! There is no need now for an Imperial Conference, because he has at once brought all the contending parties into agreement by what he has said.

The honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) says that he did not mean his gun to be loaded.

Mr. JOWETT.—That is wrong. What is the use of talking in that parrot fashion?

Mr. MATHEWS.—If the honorable member did not mean his motion to be a want of confidence motion, surely by this time he can see that the Government took it as such.

Mr. JOWETT.—That is their look-out.

Mr. MATHEWS.—If the honorable member meant his vote the other day seriously, he must vote against the Government this afternoon. The honorable member admits that, by submitting the motion for the adjournment of the House to bring under the notice of the people the very high rates of ocean freight the people of Australia are obliged to pay, he obtained all he desired. Yet he deliberately voted against the Government, who, he said, were not to blame for those rates.

We would like to know exactly where the Farmers party stand. I claim that they are exactly the same party as the Nationalist. The honorable member for Robertson (Mr. Fleming), the latest recruit to the party, may say nasty things against the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister may retort in an equally nasty way, but we believe that, if necessary, the honorable member will vote with the Prime Minister. Likewise the honorable member for Perth (Mr. Fowler). He cares little whether the Prime Minister is a statesman or a mountebank; but when the time arrives, and if it is necessary for him to do so, he will vote with the Prime Minister. Why, therefore, all this nonsense as to whether it is safe for the Prime Minister to leave Australia without a promise of immunity for his Government? The right honorable gentleman knows, as well as we know, that in the Farmers party there are always four or six members who are prepared to vote to save the Government from defeat. They would have done so last week only that they made a mistake. The whole of the party will at any time vote to save the Government from the Labour party.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—That is the assurance for which the Prime Minister has been waiting.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member has struck the point. Some member on the Government side may be anxious to split his party, but as long as the Nationalists keep solid, the Farmers party must fall in behind them. In these circumstances, we have wasted the last four days. But the country ought to know what the Farmers party really mean—whether they will keep the Government in office until the Prime Minister returns, or whether they intend to put them out as soon as he leaves.

Mr. HILL.—Why does not the honorable member allow us to have a vote on this question? Then we would soon tell him what he wants to know.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Unfortunately, the vote will not prove it; otherwise it might as well have been taken hours ago. We want an announcement from the Country party as to what they really intend to do. Their leader tells us that he will not eat dirt, and will not give a promise of complete immunity. The people ought to know what the party have actually promised to do. They claim that the greatest respect should be paid to constitutional government and to the carrying out of pledges. In those circumstances, I am sure they will let the people know what they intend to do. Otherwise the Prime Minister will not know his position. The only assumption we can make, if he does leave Australia, is that the Farmers party are still under the wing of the Government, and will keep them in office during his absence.

Mr. MAKIN (Hindmarsh) [5.45].—While the history of the past week of the Commonwealth Parliament might be somewhat interesting because of its sensational character, it is most maddening to those who desire to see the application of those forms of constitutional government which receive the unanimous confidence of the people of Australia. Such proceedings are likely to destroy the prestige of constitutional government; and we know that during recent years there has been a feeling in the community that the existing forms of government are not working in the best interests of the people at large, and certainly do not faithfully represent those measures of progress which the people desire to see instituted in Australia. Unfortunately, this is not the only occasion on which similar circumstances have arisen in the public life of this country. Not long since, the Prime Minister gave a definite assurance to the people that if he did not secure their approval of a certain matter submitted to a referendum he would not continue in office. We remember that, while technically he may have kept to his word by walking out through the back door, he very conveniently found his way back again, evidently having been assured before he left that he would be reinstated in the position he was vacating. What

took place on that occasion did not add to the prestige of this Parliament or lead the people to have confidence in the existing forms of government. In fact, it afforded to those who are endeavouring to destroy constitutional government a very good argument and an opportunity of undermining that feeling of respect which the people should have for it. I regret that I have been associated with a Parliament in which the circumstances of last week were recorded. At one time, the Prime Minister asserts with the greatest indignation that he will not carry on if he does not secure absolute immunity for his Government during his absence at the Imperial Conference, yet now he is prepared to accept the meanest of assurances given to him privately as to the support that his Ministry is likely to receive. The adverse vote recorded against him last week is not sufficient to cause him to reconsider the position of the Government. Sir Henry Parkes, when Premier of New South Wales, was confronted with a similar set of circumstances, but, in keeping with the highest traditions of constitutional government, as observed by those intrusted with important positions of State, he tendered his resignation to the Governor immediately he found that he was not in the possession of the confidence of the majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly, and the Leader of the Opposition at the time was intrusted with the formation of a new Ministry. It was not so with the present Prime Minister, who did not allow the House to exhaust its opportunities and show that he or some one else was the best person to be intrusted with the leadership of a Government. Irrespective of whether the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) proceeds to Great Britain or not, the prestige of Australia has been depreciated because of the fact that he has not adopted the constitutional course, to ascertain whether he possessed the confidence of a majority of honorable members. The action of the members of the Country party reminds me of persons playing with political firearms, whilst ignorant of the danger likely to arise from careless handling. If these honorable members are so inexperienced in parliamentary procedure that they do not know the result of their actions, the people of Australia have a right to demand an explanation. I do not think

that the representatives of that party should be placed in a position of responsibility if they do not know what their actions are likely to lead to. Certainly they should not be given a licence to use political weapons, and I am hoping that at the next general election that such honorable members as the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett), and the honorable member for Perth (Mr. Fowler), as well as others who occupy seats on the corner benches, will be called upon to explain their behaviour last week. It is probable that the electors will recognise their incapacity, and will see that others are sent here in their place. After the experience we have had, and anticipating the vote that will be recorded on this motion, their incapacity and inconsistency is clearly shown. It will be demonstrated beyond all doubt that their actions are inconsistent, and cannot in any way be reconciled with those of men who should understand what they are doing. That being so, I feel sure that upon the first occasion that presents itself the people of Australia will not fail to record strong condemnation of their conduct, and—if I am allowed to say it—their lack of sincerity and their incapacity in not knowing the value of the votes they were recording. Their action of last week is revolting to intelligent men, and is not in accordance with the best form of parliamentary government.

There is no doubt that some will endeavour to misconstrue the result of the vote that is to be taken, and I desire to state most emphatically that, although we on this side may vote against the printing of the paper, we are not opposed to a representative of Australia proceeding to the Imperial Conference. That is not the question involved at all. We, as members of the Opposition—I think I can speak for all the members of my party—do not object to Australia being represented at the forthcoming Conference, but we are not desirous of the present Prime Minister, who is holding his position on sufferance, and who has been proved by the vote of last Thursday not to possess the entire confidence of the House, proceeding to Great Britain and pretending to represent Australia. At the same time I feel that our position should be made quite clear. The deliberations at the Imperial Conference will be controlled largely by Imperial considerations; but we must remember that we

are a people claiming a constitutional form of government with full legislative power. It should not pass without notice that it is not our desire to be controlled by certain decisions which will be absolutely binding upon the whole of the people in the Commonwealth. Personally I am not prepared to delegate to any individual or group of individuals outside of Australia the right to determine Australia's destiny. If it is said that the members of this party are imbued with disloyalty, and desire to cut the painter, I give that a most emphatic denial, because honorable members on this side of the House, and the people they represent, are as loyal, if not more loyal, than many honorable members supporting the Government.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—We should be loyal to the working class first.

Mr. MAKIN.—I quite concur with the honorable member; we should be loyal to the people we represent. We are desirous that the best interests of the people shall be conserved, and the Prime Minister in his present position does not represent the feelings of a majority of the people of Australia. I offer no apology for my contribution to this debate, because when I see in this House such strong Imperialists as the honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best) and the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster) giving their indorsement to the proposal for the Prime Minister to proceed to Great Britain as Australia's representative, I have great fears of the Commonwealth being committed to some form of Imperial control, which we do not desire or sanction. I protest against the unseemly conduct of last week, and the manner in which parliamentary procedure has been manipulated by the members of the Country party and those supporting the Government. After having witnessed what has transpired during the past few days, I believe there is a good deal of justification for the words used by the honorable member for Balaclava (Mr. Watt), who, when speaking at a meeting at St. Kilda last week, definitely stated "That men who had been in politics for many years had noted a gradual decline in the intellectuality and personality of the parliamentarians of Australia." Those present at the meeting loudly applauded that expression of

opinion, and, after the experience of last week, there is a number in this House who would say that the behaviour of the Prime Minister and his supporters has justified the remark. I am satisfied, although I sincerely regret it, that there appears to be a decline in the quality of the public men of Australia. Unfortunately, we have too many politicians and too few statesmen; I hope in the near future that the people of Australia will rectify the present position by returning a party with a majority who will see that what is done is in accordance with the highest traditions of constitutional government, which we have the right to demand.

Mr. FOWLER (Perth) [6.1].—During the course of this debate I have been referred to as one who has changed his attitude to the Government, and the honorable member for Maranoa (Mr. James Page) made some reference to the raising of the white flag. I think that honorable members who know me will admit that I have been through a good many strenuous political battles in my time, and have never sought shelter under that banner. I can assure the honorable member for Maranoa, and other honorable members who do not know me as he does, that I have no intention of ever raising the white flag. I would rather go down in the fight.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I withdraw the accusation.

Mr. FOWLER.—And I accept it in the spirit in which it is tendered. I desire to make my position quite clear. Some time ago I intended to move a motion of a somewhat momentous character, and I now desire to state that I have not changed my mind in the least regarding the necessity for such a motion being carried by this House. I prepared that motion, and was going to bring it forward at what I thought was a fitting time.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member never moved his motion.

Mr. FOWLER.—I had prepared a motion which I was willing to move in the House in the event of the necessary support being afforded.

Mr. RYAN.—I would have supported it.

Mr. TUDOR.—And so would I.

Mr. FOWLER.—I appreciate the promised support. Honorable members will realize that I was entitled to support in other quarters before I was justified in moving it. The present position, however, is one which necessitates putting aside for the time being the upsetting of an arrangement which would enable Australia to be represented at the Imperial Conference. That ought to be the paramount consideration with every honorable member of this House. It is with me at the present time, and my course of action for the time being will be determined by that all-important necessity.

Mr. WEST (East Sydney) [6.4].—I desire to refer to the humiliating position in which the representatives of the Government are placed. A motion for the adjournment of the House was submitted and carried against the Government. It does not matter to me who moved and seconded it. A motion, such as that carried on Thursday last, which takes out of the hands of the Government the conduct of the business of the House is of the gravest political significance; and had the Government desired to retain the honour and respect of their fellow-citizens they would immediately have followed the constitutional course of resigning from office. The fact that they did not do so—that they ignored the principle underlying a vote of censure—shows that they are no longer worthy of the confidence of the people. The Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes), by his action, has belittled the whole of his party. He has practically told the Parliament and the country that those whom he leaves behind when he sails for the Old Country will not be capable of carrying on the business of the Government. He has said, also, in effect, that he is the only trained man in Australia fit to hold the position of Prime Minister. I dispute that contention. We have on this side of the House men who are as able and as capable as any occupant of the Treasury bench. Had the Government adopted the constitutional course of resigning when the motion was carried against them on Thursday last, the Labour party would have come into power, and it would have been found that we have in our ranks men just as likely to make their mark at the Imperial Conference as is the Prime Minister himself. As a matter of fact, the right honorable

gentleman will not have power to commit Australia to any proposal made at that Conference. He cannot bind us to any decision arrived at by it. It is for the Parliament itself to determine what attitude shall be adopted by Australia towards every question dealt with by the Conference. As representatives of a democratic country, we are not going to leave to the decision of any one member of this Parliament grave questions which might involve Australia in war. History is full of incidents showing how careful we should be to avoid anything of the kind. I am certain that there are on this side of the House honorable members who would fill with dignity and efficiency any position to which their country might see fit to appoint them. The honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton) has very properly asked whether during the absence of the Prime Minister we, as a Parliament, are practically to be dormant. Are we to be dumb-driven cattle while the Prime Minister is away? Are we such mere creatures of circumstance that we must be deprived of all legislative power while he is at the Conference? Are we to cease to be representatives of the people and to allow the legislative business of the country to remain at a stand-still? Those who are prepared to agree to anything of the kind are not fit to be the representatives of a free and enlightened Democracy.

It is not my desire that Australia shall be unrepresented at the Imperial Conference. I want Australia to be fitly represented, and I certainly do not wish it to go forth that only one man in Australia is capable of acting for us. I contend that the Prime Minister, for the time being, whoever he may be, should alone represent Australia at a Conference of this kind. Under our constitutional form of government, the Prime Minister for the time being should have the majority of the Parliament behind him. Within the last few days, however, it has been shown quite plainly that the present Prime Minister has not behind him a majority of the people. Parliament, after all, is but a reflex of the views of the people. Member after member has said this afternoon that he is going to support this motion. Do honorable members opposite intend to take that course because they fear something? I fear nothing, because I do nothing that is not in accordance with the best interests of

my constituents. If the Government ignore, as they propose to do, the motion of censure carried against them last Thursday, I am sure that, throughout the country, I shall receive the support of the people when I say that, although the Prime Minister had not the confidence of the House, he clung to office. I shall vote against this motion, not with the object of preventing the representation of Australia at the Conference, but because I feel that the Government has not acted in the best interests of the country. That is the position which we should all take up. If the Prime Minister were made of the same stuff as myself, he would decline to remain in office after the reverse with which the Government met last week. He would decline to run the risk of being humiliated at the Conference by being told that he has not the confidence of a majority of the people. The position taken up by the Government in this matter is without parallel in Australian politics. I could refer to many instances in Australian politics where, on meeting with such a reverse, the Government of the day has resigned, and the mover of the censure motion has been invited to form a new Administration. I remember the late Mr. Want on one occasion moving in the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales a motion that no one thought would be attended with such serious consequences as the resignation of the Government. On the carrying of that motion, however, Sir Henry Parkes, who was then Premier, moved the adjournment of the House, and, later on, sent in his resignation to the Governor, with the result that, on the following day, Mr. Want was sent for. The Prime Minister should have adopted the same course. A few nights ago, an honorable member, speaking at St. Kilda, where, I understand, most of the aristocracy of Melbourne live, declared that the intelligence of the Parliament of Australia was fading away. I dare say that he had more particularly in mind the political company he keeps, and, judging by the attitude being taken up by honorable members opposite in regard to this motion he is not far wrong. It is painful to think that our standard of political honour is so low that the Government are prepared to ignore an adverse motion, and to come forward with a proposition of this kind, in the hope that Providence

will give them still another opportunity to mismanage the public affairs of Australia. The Government would have risen very much in the estimation of their fellow citizens had they resigned from office after the vote taken on Thursday last, and invited the Governor-General to send for the Leader of the Opposition. Unfortunately, at the last general elections we were not returned with a majority. This was due largely to the hostility of the press, and to the fear of many people that, if we were returned to power, the condition of the workers would be improved. I have always endeavoured to avoid personalities, but I cannot help remarking that if the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett), who submitted the motion which was responsible for the defeat of the Government, would exercise a little more judgment as a member of this House, he would do more credit to himself and raise himself in the public esteem. I suppose that it was with a desire to get into the limelight that he submitted his motion for the adjournment of the House, in order to discuss the question of ocean freights. But when an honorable member votes in opposition to the views expressed by him, he belittles himself in the eyes of the public.

This Parliament ought not to be obliged to mark time during the Prime Minister's absence in England. Urgent legislative work awaits our consideration, and we should concentrate upon that work immediately. The electors of Australia would never indorse a period of legislative inaction. They would, if given the opportunity, unhesitatingly affirm that we should proceed at once with the business which we were elected to transact. Many problems confront us, the financial problem being the most acute of all. This matter must be dealt with in the immediate future, because delay will be both dangerous and harmful. Let us bend all our energies to the solution of the pressing problems which await our attention. It is for the Ministry to set us an example in this connexion, instead of resorting to intrigue to retain their positions. No visitor to our parliamentary galleries to-day could arrive at any conclusion other than that Ministers are insincere. Their conduct is plain evidence of that. They do not

possess the confidence either of this House or of the electors of the Commonwealth. If we wish the administrative work of the country to be carried on efficiently, we must have in office a Government which is a reflex of Parliament, whilst Parliament itself must be a reflex of the people. Otherwise we shall never be able to make any real progress.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM (Gwydir) [6.24].—Unfortunately, owing to ill-health, I was absent from the House last week when the present political crisis arose. Consequently I had not the pleasure of witnessing the circus performance here, when members of the Country party discovered that there were more votes upon the Opposition side of the chamber, when a division was taken upon a formal motion for adjournment, than they anticipated. The profuse apologies to-day of the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett), who loaded the gun and injured the Government, will, I am sure, be accepted by the Prime Minister.

Mr. JOWETT.—I never apologized.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—I am sure that the honorable member's profuse apologies will be accepted by the Prime Minister and his colleagues, who are, of course, intent upon holding on to office at all costs. The honorable member told us to-day that he did not mean anything.

Mr. JOWETT.—I did not say that.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—The honorable member did not intend that the Government should be defeated. But we can scarcely accept his protestations as being entirely without guile. I believe that he thoroughly understood what he was doing when he submitted the motion for adjournment, and that he fully appreciated the seriousness of closing this Parliament for a day in opposition to the wishes of the Government. That is precisely what occurred. Parliament met to transact business for eight or nine hours, and a couple of hours after it had assembled it was, upon a motion moved by the honorable member for Grampians, closed for a day in spite of the wishes of the Government and of their followers. The control of public business was thus taken out of the hands of the Government, and the press in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia recorded the occurrence under the heading, "Defeat

of the Ministry." Of course, the honorable member for Grampians has said that he did not mean to defeat the Government. In other words, he is prepared to vote against the Government only when he knows that there is not a majority against them. I am merely a novice in parliamentary procedure, but I thoroughly understand the seriousness of taking the conduct of business out of the hands of the Ministry. The honorable member for Grampians is far older in the head than I am. He has made a success of business outside of this Parliament, and consequently we cannot accept his assurance that he voted as he did without knowing what he was voting for. He submitted a motion, and every honorable member who wished to speak upon it did so. A vote upon it was then taken and carried against the Government. The Prime Minister at once became very angry, and straightway threatened the Country party with all sorts of pains and penalties. He said that he would refuse to attend the Imperial Conference in the absence of a guarantee that his Government would be immune from attack during his absence. The Leader of the Country party refused to give any such guarantee. He declined to do so both in this chamber and in the public press. The fact is so well known that the dogs are barking it in our streets. But between Friday last and to-day, conversations have taken place between representatives of the Government and of the Country party with the result that, although it is publicly denied, a guarantee has been given that the Ministry will be immune from attack during the Prime Minister's absence in England. Every member of the Country party knows that a secret understanding has been arrived at between that party and the Government, and that the motion which we are now discussing is the result of collaboration between members of the Country party and members of the Nationalist party.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 8 p.m.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—I was saying that discussions have taken place between the representatives of the Country party and the Government, and an understanding has been arrived at, resulting in the motion submitted to-day.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Is that correct?

Mr. Prowse.—Where did you get your information from?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—My information is quite correct; if not, what has taken place between the parties since Friday? The Leader of the Country party (Dr. Earle Page) still publicly refuses to give the Government a guarantee of immunity. The Prime Minister has receded from his previous position; and it is now for the public to judge whether the Country party or the Nationalist party has backed down. We on this side are of opinion that both have backed down. The Government have been forced to back down openly, whereas the Country party has backed down secretly, and an understanding has been arrived at between them. It is all very well for the honorable member for Cowper (Dr. Earle Page) to say that the Country party is a separate party with a separate room and a separate policy, but if the members of the Country party support the Government, they become accessories to the actions of the Government. During the period the Prime Minister is away in England, if the Government continues to live, a Royal Commission will inquire into the administration of the Cockatoo Dockyard—a matter of grave public importance. Three or four Ministers have a "finger in the pie," though none accepts any responsibility. Apparently the Country party is prepared to carry the odium that will be attached to the Government if the Royal Commission bears out what the Prime Minister has indicated in connexion with the Dockyard. Our friends of the Country party will endeavour to convince the public that they are not allied with the Nationalist Government; but on Thursday they helped to defeat the Government, and closed up Parliament for a day, and, if they are sincere, they will, by their vote to-night, show that they stand by the vote they then gave. I have a vivid recollection of reading, in my boyhood, of the defeat of Governments, and I know that a Government with any self-respect would not tolerate the business being taken out of their hands for five minutes, much less to allow Parliament to be shut up for a day.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—It shows the stage the Government have reached.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—Quite so; it shows how responsible government is being dragged into disrepute. That is the position which the electors see—that

is how the Government stand. The honorable member for Grampians, who submitted the motion on Thursday last, says he would move again in the same direction under similar circumstances. If so, this Parliament may be shut up for a day, or for a week, and the Government still hold on to office. Whatever balm the Country party may apply to its conscience, and however it may vote to-night, its members cannot escape the fact that they helped to take the business out of the hands of the Government last week, and to-day are prepared to reverse the vote they then gave on the important question of the freights charged, not only by private firms, but by the Commonwealth Line of Steamers. We on this side have repeatedly drawn attention to the manner in which the Commonwealth steamers are used to bolster up high freights, but, with the exception of one or two, we cannot induce the members of the Country party to vote with us. On Friday, owing to a mistake—

Mr. JOWETT.—There was no mistake; it is your mistake, my friend!

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—It is said that every circus has one clown, and I quite believe it.

Mr. JOWETT.—Speak for yourself.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—When a gentleman says that there was no mistake, and then apologizes for the way he voted—

Mr. JOWETT.—I did not apologize.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—Such a gentleman has no fixed or definite ideas in regard to his actions in Parliament, whatever he may have in regard to his actions outside.

Mr. JOWETT.—You know I did not apologize.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—I think your apology will be accepted by the Prime Minister. No censure motion from this side could be so severe as the motion carried on Thursday last. No matter what may be said, we cannot accept the protestations of the members of the Country party as being sincere; they cannot dissociate themselves from the Nationalist party, despite what they say about their separate room or separate policy. Their policy, when it comes to votes, as I think will be shown to-night, runs hand-in-hand with that of the Nationalist party.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—See how you will flock over to save the Government on the Tariff!

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—The members of the Country party had an opportunity to support the honorable member for Perth (Mr. Fowler) if they did not agree with the Tariff. They had an opportunity to throw the Government out of office before even the discussion started; but they did not embrace it. They now say that they will adopt a policy of Free Trade for one section of the community, while granting Protection to another section. Briefly stated, the Nationalist party has eaten humble pie. The Prime Minister is so intent on his trip to England that he is prepared at all costs to hang on to office; indeed, I could go so far as to say that in this he pays great disrespect to the high office he holds. A man who will go, presumably, to represent the whole of Australia, after having suffered defeat at the hands of the Chamber he is supposed to lead, is in a humiliating position. It is for the electors to say whether they approve of the attitude adopted by both of the parties who are opposed to Labour. Honorable members opposite may call themselves the Country party, or they may call themselves Progressives, Liberals, National Labourites, or whatever they like, but when it comes to votes here they are all simply anti-Labour, and their policies run hand-in-hand. In short, the parties are one and the same, and they are only adding to their long list of broken election pledges. Prior to the elections the members of the Country party gave pledges of hostility to the Nationalists, and I remember reading their speeches in condemnation of the Nationalist administration. Many of the Country party defeated members of the Nationalist party; but what has been the result? Has it been to the benefit of the people of Australia? Not at all. On every occasion when the life of this condemned Nationalist Government was in danger, it has always been the members of the Country party who saved it. The Prime Minister did not approach the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Tudor) in order to get immunity from attack. Why? Because the Prime Minister knows it is no use approaching this side in order to establish a safeguard for smothering up those scandals for which the Government are responsible. The right honorable

gentleman knows that it is from the Country party he must get immunity from attack; it is from that party he expects support in smothering up his bad administration, a sample of which is afforded in the case of Cockatoo Island Dockyard. Two of the men who have been most active in condemning the management of the Dockyard are the most active supporters of the Government. What will be the position of the Prime Minister when the findings of the Royal Commission—

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—The honorable member must not discuss that matter now.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—There is a danger that the Prime Minister, if he goes as the representative of Australia to the Imperial Conference, may find himself without a majority in this House, if all honorable members opposite live up to their pre-election pledges. In my opinion there is a new secret coalition. Those concerned are afraid to come into the open, and so secret conversations are held, and secret understandings arrived at.

Mr. JOWETT.—No.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—Intriguing is going on; the bad old system of secret diplomacy is adopted by the two parties opposite in order to secure the present Government in office, the administration of which the Country party itself has been most vigorous in condemning. I trust the members of the Country party will never again have an opportunity of foisting themselves upon the electors as a separate body from the Nationalist party. When the vote is taken to-night, I believe it will be seen that the members of the Country party are prepared to keep the present bad old administration alive, despite their protestations on the public platform.

Mr. McWILLIAMS (Franklin) [8.14].—I think it is only right for me to say that what the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) has stated is absolutely correct. Many honorable members opposite who represent country districts seemed to think nothing of the motion submitted by the honorable member last week, but I remind them that the freights on primary products between Australia and England mean all the difference between success and failure to a large number of our primary producers.

Mr. LAVELLE.—Do you say that we think the freights do not matter?

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Those honorable members to whom I refer sneered and jeered throughout the debate on that motion.

Mr. LAVELLE.—We supported that motion much to your chagrin, and we are going to be consistent!

Mr. JOWETT.—And honorable members opposite have been jeering at me ever since.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—May I break off here to say that the most extraordinary part of this business is that the Country party received the support to a great extent of my honorable friends opposite until we happened to beat the Government, and now they cannot say a good word for us. The motion which the honorable member for Grampians brought before the House is one with which the primary producers from one end of Australia to the other are closely associated. I am firmly convinced that the freights on primary products, with the slump that has taken place in Australia's primary produce, will mean, unless there is a great, a drastic, and immediate reduction, the spreading of disaster among many of the farmers of Australia.

As to the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) going home to England, I have held from the date of the incident that it was a great mistake that Australia was not represented in 1917, and it would be worse than a mistake, it would be a criminal blunder on the part of Australia, if we were not represented at the approaching Conference. One has only to take up the daily papers to see what is happening in the Pacific. Who can tell what will happen there? There is no part of the world which is so vitally interested in a disturbance in the Pacific as this Australia of ours. We are the furthest removed from the Old Country, and are surrounded by alien races, and not far from those from whom we have a right, perhaps, to expect a friendlier attitude than we have found. This is a time when the whole Empire must stand shoulder to shoulder, or go asunder. Believing that, I say it would be a calamity for Australia if our voice were not raised at that Conference. As to who goes, it is an insult to Australia to say that only one man in the Commonwealth is competent to represent it at the Conference. You, Mr. Speaker,

have been through all this sort of thing with myself and other old members. First it was Mr. Barton, the one man in all Australia fit to be Prime Minister; then we had Mr. Deakin; then we had Sir George Reid; then we came down to Mr. Watson; and now we have the honorable member for Bendigo (Mr. Hughes). All these men take their little turns in the firmament, each as the one man that can represent or deal with Australia; each in his turn disappears, and we find that another man takes his place. So far as my opinion goes on this matter, I stand for every word that the Leader of this party (Dr. Earle Page) said in this House and in New South Wales. We were asked as a party to give immunity to the Government, and we declined to give it.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Then what do you give to the Government?

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Nothing.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—Your Leader did not say that.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—I think honorable members who know me are aware that I am no apologist for the Prime Minister. I give this House my word of honour that the assumption which I have just heard from the honorable member for Gwydir in his speech has not one tittle of foundation.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—We know different.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—So far as I am aware, and I am in as close touch with my Leader as any other member of this party, the policy of this party has not changed one iota.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—They changed their Leader, I notice.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—They did change their Leader, but that is not a nice remark to make. For twelve months I led my party to the best of my ability. I left that position with honour, and I call upon my present Leader to say if there is one member in this party who is giving him a more loyal support than I am to-day. The honorable member's remark was not a generous one.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—I did not intend it in an ungenerous manner for the honorable member. I only wished to point out that the Country party "sacked" the honorable member so that they would not have to follow him—

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—Order! It is quite out of order for an honorable member to interrupt the honorable member who is addressing the Chair.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—As to the Prime Minister going to England, I say it is his duty to go, but the attitude that this party has taken up, as I am sure my Leader would have said if he had spoken at any length on this motion, has not altered one iota from the utterance which he made here on Friday last. I am not betraying any secret when I say that in that utterance on Friday he expressed the opinions of every individual member of our party. On the question of immunity, I repeat that our party stand unaltered. We have said that we shall take no unfair advantage of the Prime Minister during his absence. We should have followed that course if this discussion had not occurred. I do not believe there is a member in this House—Nationalist, Labour, or Country—who would take an advantage of any member during his absence that he would not take during his presence. Our attitude is that we will take no unfair advantage of the Prime Minister during his absence. The Government stand or fall on the merits or demerits of their legislation and on the merits or demerits of their administration during his absence as they must do during his presence.

The members of this party have been taunted with not being National and with not representing Labour. I say the Country party are the true Nationalist party of Australia, representing as we do the national primary production of Australia. I say we are the true Nationalists, and I say also that we represent Labour.

The honorable member for Maranoa loudly interjecting,

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! I ask the honorable member for Maranoa, who is an old parliamentarian, and should know better, to assist the Speaker in trying to secure a fair hearing for every honorable member who is called upon to address the Chair. I hope there will be no further interruptions, especially immediately after the Speaker has called for order.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—The Country party represent the true Labour of Australia. Go out into the district that I or any other member of this party represents, and you will find there the men who work the hardest and get the least return for their labour. I said in Sydney that if you compare the life of the men out in the Victorian mallee, or in the back-blocks of Western Australia, Queensland, or Tasmania, struggling as they do from morning to night—no eight hours for them—if you compare the labour they perform and the remuneration they receive with the remuneration of the aristocrats of labour in the cities, you will soon see who is the true labourer. The men we represent are the real workers of Australia.

Mr. GABB.—They are about 30 per cent. of them.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—The honorable member and others know that organization is going on freely and strenuously—I am not complaining of it—against the members of this party. All the bitterness comes because we dare to say that the country men shall send country men to represent them in this Parliament.

I wish to make my position clear. If the Prime Minister accepts the offer that our Leader made to him, that offer stands to-day, the same as it was on Friday, the same as it was when this discussion began, and the position of this party remains exactly the same to-day.

Mr. GABB.—Then why has the Prime Minister altered? Why has he backed down?

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—I am not the Prime Minister's keeper. I do not know why the Prime Minister should alter his views. He must speak for himself.

Mr. GABB.—He generally has something in his bag when he does.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—This party are in nobody's bag. It is because this party refuse to walk into a bag that we are sometimes assailed from both sides. I repeat that, on all matters of administration, this party remain absolutely free, untrammelled, and unchallenged to exercise their right as individuals and as a party, no matter whether the Prime Minister is in England or in Australia. Australia should be represented at the Conference.

The attitude which the Leader of our

party took up is the correct one, that if the Government were not prepared to send their man Home then the alternative course must be taken.

On the question of immunity, and the suggestion that there has been intrigue, I wish on the floor of this House to state that, so far as I know—and I am, perhaps, in as close touch with the Leader and officers of this party as any of the individual members of the House—I can give my solemn word of honour that there has been neither intrigue nor improper action by this party during the whole of these proceedings.

Mr. BRENNAN (Batman) [8.28].—There are two motions pending before the House, each of them being that a paper should be printed, so that the country may flatter itself with the pleasing thought that, as the result of these long deliberations, there is a reasonable prospect that two papers will probably be printed eventually. The most extraordinary thing about the discussion so far is that none of the debate has been on the papers that it is proposed to print, either in connexion with this motion or the other motion that was suspended to enable this one to be determined. I should like to say a few words to this interesting Government of ours on the position in which they find themselves at present. I shall not be so severe on the Country party as some honorable members have been. I shall not bait the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) on his notorious position in the matter, but I should like to suggest these considerations to the Government and to the Country party: The Government took up the stand that by reason of the motion carried in this House last week their position was challenged and compromised, and that if that expression of opinion stood, the Government must resign. In other words, unless the Country party were prepared to make something in the nature of a retraction of, or compromise with, what they had already done, the Government would be in such a position that they must resign.

Mr. TUDOR.—Does not the honorable member think that they should resign?

Mr. BRENNAN.—I have thought so consistently for months, and I have advocated that course as an easy way out of the manifold difficulties in which this

country finds itself, but the Government have not yet taken my advice. I suggest that if the Government had such a sensitive conscience that they felt that they must do something to rehabilitate themselves, an easy and direct course was for them to have asked the Country party whether on mature consideration they indorsed what they had done last week. That would have been a very straight question. As the Country party's vote was vital, and if persisted in would be fatal, the question should have been, if a question was to be asked at all, "Do you on deliberation and reflection adhere to the stand you adopted last week?"

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—We never thought of that.

Mr. BRENNAN.—The Treasurer has thought tremblingly of every aspect of this case for the last week. And I suggest to honorable members of the Country party that, if they are consistent, as they claim to be, and as some of their apologists amongst the Nationalists claim that they are, they should have said—"We mean to-day what we meant then. Now go on with the work or get out. We have nothing further to say." But what is the result of the Prime Minister's lucubrations on this matter? The Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) has come to this House and carefully quoted what the members of the Country party said, and has asked the House to affirm that they meant what they said, and if they meant what they said, then he, as Prime Minister is satisfied, they are justified, and after the waste of a week we can proceed with the consideration of the Tariff and other matters of importance. That is the position very briefly stated. The Prime Minister said—

In order to afford honorable members an opportunity of expressing and registering their opinion by vote on these two points—(1) whether it is desirous that the Government should not regard the vote on Thursday as one intended to take the business out of its hands—

having already received the positive assurance that the members of the Country party did not mean anything of the sort—

and (2) whether it wishes me to represent Australia at the Conference.

Having already received a positive assurance from the members of the Country party that they were quite willing that he should represent Australia at the Con-

ference, the right honorable gentleman initiated a debate to affirm by resolution of a majority the very things which the Country party had said. Therefore the motion can carry us not an inch further than we were at the close of Thursday's sitting when the vote adverse to the Government was carried. This motion, if carried, will not whitewash the Government. It will be sufficient for the Prime Minister, who is accustomed to disregard both his own pledges and the votes of the House, and for the docile supporters who sit behind him, and for the go-betweens who talk against the Government and vote with them, but it will not serve any real purpose in undoing anything affirmatively done last week by the carrying of the vote against the Government. I listened to the tearful speech of the honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best); he was emotional and eloquent. First of all he turned to his friends and supporters of the Country party, loyal in their vote, though hostile in their speeches, and said, in effect at all events, "My friends and brothers, you have been consistent in everything. Last week, you said that you did not wish other than that the Prime Minister should represent us on the other side of the world; to-day you say the same. Last week you said you had no desire to unduly embarrass the Government; to-day you say the same. You are consistent in everything you have said." And the honorable gentleman was right. But this protagonist of consistency failed to point out that there was grave inconsistency between what members of the Country party said and what they did on the floor of the House. That was the only matter of real interest and importance. Honorable gentlemen in the corner talk nicely, and every sentence is consistent with the preceding one, but it is only the direction they take when the Speaker asks the House to divide that marks them inconsistent with their speeches. So I leave them in the company of their friend, the honorable member for Kooyong.

It is suggested by the honorable member that our minds should be bent particularly upon the question of our representation at the Imperial Conference, and he has urged that the voice of Australia should be heard at that gathering.

The voice of Australia! I am not quite sure that it is so vastly important that the voice of Australia should be heard at the Conference. I am much more concerned that the voice of Australia should be heard and registered in the Australian Parliament. But if the voice of Australia is to be heard at the Conference, God forbid that it should be piped through the gramophone of the Prime Minister. I should be sorry to think that anything the Prime Minister might say at the Imperial Conference on the other side of the world should bind either my conscience or my outlook upon Australian affairs. I should be sorry to think that the people of this country should ultimately, or ever, feel themselves bound in the slightest degree by the representations made by the present Prime Minister at that Conference.

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—He did not do too badly when he was there before.

Mr. BRENNAN.—He did as badly as he could, and he has always been a genius in doing badly for this country. We are told that, in regard to the question of naval defence, it is important that we should be represented at the Imperial Conference. We should be better represented in Australia than we are on questions of naval and other defence, and I should be sorry to think that the Prime Minister spoke for the Parliament of this country on the other side of the world, at all events, to the extent of binding us upon the question of naval defence.

Mr. GABB.—He tried to bind us on the question of conscription.

Mr. BRENNAN.—There have been many things in regard to which he has found that he has in this House pliant instruments who will enable him to defeat the will of the majority of the people outside the House. But I leave the matter at this stage.

I do not intend to discuss now the matter of foreign affairs, which will more properly come forward upon another motion. I simply say that it is worse than absurd, it is almost tragic, that this motion should have been tabled to-day for the deliberate purpose of creating a purely fictitious expression of loyalty on the part of members to the Prime Minister. If carried—and it is intended to have the support of the Country party, and it will get the support of that party, because the members of it know that, although they

may irritate the Prime Minister with impunity, they may not defeat him with impunity—

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order!

Mr. BRENNAN.—So they will not make good their vote of last week. There is no danger of their doing so. Therefore, let this paper be printed without further delay, so that we may get on to the consideration of wider and more important Imperial matters, and so that we may have an opportunity, more fittingly in the discussion of another motion, to register the views of some of us as to where Australia should really stand in Imperial matters, and so that we may have an opportunity of calling attention to the dual voice of this Government, who with one voice, say—"We owe everything to Britain; we are subservient to Britain; we are as dross to Britain; we have no independence, we have nothing, and we enjoy nothing but what we get from Britain." And with the other voice they declare, "We are going forward with our chest thrown out, a new-born giant nation to give expression to Australian sentiment." They do not know what Australian sentiment is. The Prime Minister has not, and never had, any idea of what real Australian sentiment is. He is now, and always has been, alien from Australian sentiment, and he, with his Government, are mere toadies and make-shifts for Britain. There is no Australianism in them. But it will be more proper to deal with those matters on another motion, upon which I hope to have the honour of expressing in this Australian Parliament the Australian view. This motion—I may not call it a farce—having been debated, let it be carried by the full strength of the Nationalists, whipped up so that there may be no mistake on this occasion, and let the paper be printed. It is a somewhat informal paper, anyhow, for it is not signed. We should be careful of these unsigned papers. I do not wish the right honorable the Prime Minister to be again misrepresented by an unsigned document. Already an unsigned paper has gone forth which has greatly embarrassed some people and misled them as to the nature and extent of the Prime Minister's benevolence.

Mr. LAVELLE (Calare). [8.43].—At the outset of my remarks I desire to reply to the statement made by the honorable member for Franklin (Mr. McWilliams)

that, although the motion for the adjournment of the House in order to discuss excessive shipping freights was one of vital importance to the people of Australia, it was jeered at by members of the Labour party, and did not receive their support.

Mr. JOWETT.—I said I was jeered at.

Mr. LAVELLE.—The statement was that the motion was jeered at and was not supported by honorable members of this side. It may be all right for the honorable member for Franklin to try to mislead the people in some obscure part where there are no press representatives, but it is useless for him to try that sort of thing in this Chamber. As proof that we considered the shipping freights a matter of vital importance, not only to the producers, but to every section of the community, we supported very effectively the motion moved by the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett)—too effectively, in the opinion of the mover and the Government. We supported and indorsed the motion submitted last week, and voted in favour of it much, as I have said, to the embarrassment of the Government and of our friends in the Ministerial corner. Not only did we support the agitation against the present high oversea freights on that occasion, but we shall further support it to-day in order to emphasize the fact that we meant the vote which we recorded on Thursday last. I mention that in reply to the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett).

In common with that honorable member and other honorable members who have spoken, we are of opinion that Australia should be represented at the Imperial Conference, but honorable members on this side are not of the opinion that Australia can be represented by the Prime Minister.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—We might not lose anything if we were not represented there at all.

Mr. LAVELLE.—We shall not lose anything if we are not represented by the Prime Minister. I believe, however, that Australia should be represented at the Imperial Conference, but not by the Prime Minister, and I shall do my utmost on this and every other occasion to prevent him representing this country. It has been apparent to every honorable member and to all outside who have fol-

lowed recent events closely, that on Thursday last the Prime Minister thought that he had an excellent opportunity to suggest that the vote then recorded prevented Australia being represented at the Conference in order to secure a promise of absolute immunity for the Government from members of the Country party. There is not the slightest doubt, judging by the reports given to the press by the Leader of the Country party (Dr. Earle Page), and the statement made by the Prime Minister on Friday morning, that he did receive that assurance, and it would have been faithfully carried out had it not been for the fact that in the remarks which he made the Prime Minister made it too hot for the members of the Country party.

Dr. EARLE PAGE.—That is not correct.

Mr. LAVELLE.—Apparently, the Prime Minister misjudged some of the men with whom he was dealing, and he made it so hot for them that they were forced either to admit publicly that they were so incompetent to represent the electors that they did not know what they were doing and did not know what their vote meant, or to assert their manhood and put up a fight. The Prime Minister overdid things, and made it too hot for members of the Country party, with the result that a number of them repudiated the promises which they had already given him. So we find the right honorable gentleman using the Imperial Conference as a whip with which to flog the Country party into absolute subjection.

On Thursday evening last, when the Government were defeated on the motion submitted by the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett), the House immediately adjourned, and honorable members opposite immediately held a Nationalist party meeting, at which they sat late into the night, and adjourned till the following morning. They met again on the following morning, and when they came into the chamber the Prime Minister made his speech in which, amongst other things, he stated that, although the Leader of the Country party and the Whip had assured him that the members of that party had no intention of embarrassing the Government or of taking the business out of the Government's hands—

Mr. GIBSON.—That is incorrect.

Mr. LAVELLE.—He went on to say that that did not get away from the fact that by their action the members of the Country party did take the business out of the hands of the Government, and he further said that no self-respecting Government could carry on in the circumstances. He went on to say that he must, in this Chamber, have an assurance of immunity from the Country party or otherwise he would not carry on. He put before the House a motion for the adjournment in order to enable the Government to further consider their position. That motion was carried, and the House adjourned so that the Government might further consider their position. In the interval between last Friday and to-day we have found the Leader of the Country party in the press of two States adopting a firm attitude. We have found the Prime Minister stating to-day that having had the assurance of members of the Country party that by their vote they meant no harm to the Government he intended to accept that assurance in spite of the fact that on Friday last he said he could not accept it. Then we had the spectacle of the Leader of the Country party standing up here and indorsing the remarks made by the Prime Minister to-day. So not only did the Prime Minister climb down, but the Leader of the Country party also climbed down.

Dr. EARLE PAGE.—I rise to a point of order. The honorable member for Calare is making deliberately incorrect statements, both in regard to the speech I made to-day, and my attitude during the week end. I demand that these statements be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—Order! The honorable member has raised no point of order. If the honorable member who is addressing the Chair has made references to the honorable member for Cowper (Dr. Earle Page) that are not in accordance with facts, or has misrepresented the honorable member's utterances in any way it will be quite in order, when the honorable member for Calare has resumed his seat, for the honorable member for Cowper to get up and make a personal explanation in order to correct any such misrepresentations, but he is not in order in doing so

in the middle of the speech of the honorable member for Calare.

Mr. LAVELLE.—I am sorry that the Leader of the Country party should think that I am misrepresenting him intentionally or unintentionally. I have no desire to misrepresent him or any other member of the House. I have merely set forth accurately what transpired in this House this afternoon and on Thursday and Friday last. And I have shown that both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Country party have climbed down, and have receded from the attitude they took up on Thursday and Friday last.

The proceedings of last week have merely served to prove more conclusively than ever that after all the Country party and the Nationalist party are one and the same. The honorable member for Robertson (Mr. Fleming) in his opening remarks to-day, stated that at the last election he was one of those who were indorsed by both the Country party and the Nationalist party. He said that other honorable members on the Government side were also indorsed by both parties. We all know well that if a candidate is indorsed by two political parties there must be very little, if any, difference between those parties. I am sure that the electors, if they were not previously of that opinion, are certainly now of the opinion that the Country and Nationalist parties are one and the same. A certain course has been adopted to-day in order to give the Prime Minister an opportunity, and, apparently, he does not want much of an opportunity, to find a way out of the difficult position in which he is placed, because he is determined to go to the Imperial Conference. He is going there whether it involves a loss of dignity and prestige or anything else, so long as it does not involve a loss of his position as Prime Minister. A great deal of time has been taken up in debating a motion for the printing of a certain paper dealing with cables which the Prime Minister received from England in November last, but every member of this House, and every person outside is aware that this is merely a weak move on the part of the Government to find a way out of the difficulty in which they have been placed by the vote taken on Thursday. Having listened to the assurance given to-day by the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett), who moved the

motion upon which the Government were defeated on Thursday last, and also to the assurance given by the ex-Leader of the Country party (Mr. McWilliams) that they did mean the vote which they then recorded, I intend to move the following amendment—

That after the word "printed" the following words be added:—"but this House indorses the vote taken on Thursday last on the motion of the honorable member for Grampians."

Mr. RYAN.—Hear, hear. That is to the point.

Mr. LAVELLE.—That, I think, will be to the point, as the honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan) interjects.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—The House did adjourn on Thursday, so the vote was put into execution.

Mr. LAVELLE.—I intend, by my amendment, to prove that, so far as honorable members on this side are concerned, we shall indorse the vote taken on last Thursday, and will at the same time give members of the Country party an opportunity of showing whether they meant the vote they recorded on that occasion, or did not. It is useless for them to say that they did not mean to take the business out of the hands of the Government, and I wish, by the amendment I intend to propose, to see if they are sincere in the opinions they have expressed on the question of ocean freights. I hope that a division will be taken on my amendment before long, and that it will be carried.

Mr. TUDOR.—Can the honorable member for Calare move his amendment after the amendment now before the House has been disposed of?

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—Order! The honorable member having spoken, cannot move the amendment; but any other honorable member who has not already spoken can move it if he so desires after the amendment before the House has been disposed of. There can only be one amendment before the House at a time.

Question—That the words proposed to be added be so added (Mr. CONSIDINE'S amendment)—put. The House divided.

Ayes	...	...	...	23
Noes	...	...	...	46
Majority	...	...	—	23

AYES.

Blakeley, A.	Maloney, Dr.
Brennan, F.	Mathews, J.
Catts, J. H.	McGrath, D. C.
Charlton, M.	Moloney, Parker
Consideine, M. P.	Nicholls, S. R.
Cunningham, L. L.	Ryan, T. J.
Fenton, J. E.*	Tudor, F. G.
Gabb, J. M.	Watkins, D.
Lavelle, T. J.	West, J. E.
Lazzarini, H. P.	Tellers:
Mahony, W. G.	Page, James
Makin, N. J. O.	Riley, E.

NOES.

Atkinson, L.	Hughes, W. M.
Bamford, F. W.	Jackson, D. S.
Bell, G. J.	Jowett, E.
Best, Sir Robert	Lamond, Hector
Blundell, R. P.	Lister, J. H.
Bowden, E. K.	Livingston, J.
Cameron, D. C.	Mackay, G. H.
Chanter, J. M.	Marks, W. M.
Chapman, Austin	Marr, C. W. C.
Cook, Sir Joseph	Maxwell, G. A.
Cook, Robert	McWilliams, W. J.
Corser, E. B. C.	Page, Dr. Earle
Fleming, W. M.	Poynton, A.
Foley, G.	Prowse, J. H.
Foster, Richard	Rodgers, A. S.
Fowler, J. M.	Ryrie, Sir Granville
Francis, F. H.	Smith, Laird
Gibson, W. G.	Stewart, P. G.
Greene, W. M.	Watt, W. A.
Gregory, H.	Wise, G. H.
Groom, L. E.	Tellers:
Hay, A.	Burchell, R. J.
Higgs, W. G.	Story, W. H.
Hill, W. C.	

PAIRS.

Anstey, F.	Bayley, J. G.
McDonald, C.	Bruce, S. M.

Question so resolved in the negative.
Amendment negatived.

Mr. GABB (Angas) [9.5].—I move—

That the following words be added to the motion printed":—"but this House indorses the vote taken on Thursday last on the motion of the honorable member for Grampians."

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I submit that the amendment has no relevancy to the question.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—The amendment is out of order for the reason that a vote of the House cannot be dealt with in the manner proposed. A vote once given stands, and needs no further action of the House to indorse it, and it can only be again revived on a substantive motion for its revision.

Original question put.	The House
divided.	
Ayes ...	... 46
Noes ...	... 23
Majority ...	... 23
	—

AYES.

Atkinson, L.	Hughes, W. M.
Bamford, F. W.	Jackson, D. S.
Bell, G. J.	Jowett, E.
Best, Sir Robert	Lamond, Hector
Blundell, R. P.	Lister, J. H.
Bowden, E. K.	Livingston, J.
Cameron, D. C.	Mackay, G. H.
Chanter, J. M.	Marks, W. M.
Chapman, Austin	Marr, C. W. C.
Cook, Sir Joseph	Maxwell, G. A.
Cook, Robert	McWilliams, W. J.
Corser, E. B. C.	Page, Dr. Earle
Fleming, W. M.	Poynton, A.
Foley, G.	Prowse, J. H.
Foster, Richard	Rodgers, A. S.
Fowler, J. M.	Ryrie, Sir Granville
Francis, F. H.	Smith, Laird
Gibson, W. G.	Stewart, P. G.
Greene, W. M.	Watt, W. A.
Gregory, H.	Wise, G. H.
Groom, L. E.	
Hay, A.	
Higgs, W. G.	
Hill, W. C.	

NOES.

Blakeley, A.	Maloney, Dr.
Brennan, F.	Mathews, J.
Catts, J. H.	McGrath, D. C.
Charlton, M.	Moloney, Parker
Considine, M. P.	Nicholls, S. R.
Cunningham, L. L.	Ryan, T. J.
Fenton, J. E.	Tudor, F. G.
Gabb, J. M.	Watkins, D.
Lavelle, T. J.	West, J. E.
Lazzarini, H. P.	
Mahony, W. G.	
Makin, N. J. O.	

PAIRS.

Bayley, J. G.	Anstey, F.
Bruce, S. M.	McDonald, C.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

CANBERRA.**LAND SYSTEM AND APPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS SITES.**

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN asked the Minister for Home and Territories, *upon notice*—

1. When is the opportunity to be given to Parliament to discuss the land system to be adopted at Canberra—whether it will be by Land Act or Land Ordinance—and what length of tenure is to be given for business leases?

2. Will he inform the House what steps are being taken to meet the applications of

business men and others who have applied for business sites at Canberra, so that they may have an opportunity of erecting premises for business purposes there?

Mr. POYNTON.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. The question of the system of land tenure to be adopted in the Federal Capital Territory—whether by Land Ordinance or by Land Act—is under the consideration of the Government. In the meantime an Ordinance is being prepared, which can be converted into an Act if so decided. Provision will be made for fixed periods of re-appraisements. The question of building regulations and the matter of the lay-out of business and residential sites have been referred to the Advisory Committee for immediate attention.

2. As soon as these matters are finalized applications will be invited for the lease of the sites.

COMMONWEALTH BONDS AND STOCK.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN asked the Treasurer, *upon notice*—

Have any suggestions been made regarding the convenience and saving that would be effected to holders of Commonwealth War, Peace, and other bonds and stock if the Commonwealth Bank could act as intermediary between buyer and seller, and arrange for the transfer of bonds and stock from holder to purchaser without both having to pay commission thereon?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—In 1918 a suggestion was made that the Commonwealth Bank should purchase £10 bonds at the market rates, and that no commission should be charged. After careful consideration it was decided not to go on with the proposal. The present position in regard to commission is that the purchaser pays no commission, but the seller is charged a commission of 1s. on each £10 bond.

COMMONWEALTH STEAMER CONTRACTS.

Mr. McWILLIAMS asked the Minister in Charge of Shipping, *upon notice*—

1. Whether the manager of the Commonwealth line of steamers, or the Minister, has entered into contracts for coastal, Inter-State, or overseas freights, for refrigerated space or ordinary cargo?

2. If so, at what rates, and over what period do such contracts extend?

Mr. HUGHES.—It is not considered desirable to publicly supply the information asked for, but the honorable member will be furnished with the particulars privately if he so desires.

AUSTRALIAN NOTES FUNDS.

STATE BORROWINGS.

Mr. FENTON asked the Treasurer, *upon notice*—

1. Is it a fact that the Commonwealth Government has loaned from the Notes Trust Funds about £20,000,000 (New South Wales, £8,200,000; Victoria, £4,000,000; Queensland, £800,000; South Australia, £3,100,000; Western Australia, £3,400,000; Tasmania, £1,460,000); and, if so, will the Treasurer inform the House whether the States have repaid any of the loans on the due dates?

2. Whether they have paid the interest on these loans on due dates?

3. Whether the Commonwealth is in a position of security in respect to the repayment of these loans and interest thereon?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. The Commonwealth Government has made the following loans to the States from the Australian Notes Funds:—

New South Wales	...	...	£9,800,000
Victoria	...	...	5,706,000
Queensland	...	...	2,490,000
South Australia	...	...	2,926,000
Western Australia	...	...	4,798,750
Tasmania	...	...	1,969,000
Total	...	...	£27,689,750

The following repayments have been made on due dates:—

New South Wales	...	...	£2,200,000
Victoria	...	...	243,000
Queensland	...	...	1,000,000
Western Australia	...	...	713,750
Total	...	...	£4,156,750

In addition to these repayments, securities have been sold to the Commonwealth Bank by the Commonwealth, as follows:—

New South Wales	...	...	£200,000
Victoria	...	...	196,000
Western Australia	...	...	60,000
Tasmania	...	...	40,000
Total	...	...	£496,000

2. Interest on the loans due to the Commonwealth has been paid on due dates.

3. Yes.

VETERINARY OFFICERS' APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

1. Whether the fourteen veterinary officers appointed since 30th June, at a total salary of £6,575, have commenced their duties?
2. What are their special duties?
3. Where are they located?
4. Under which department are they working?

Mr. GREENE.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. Four of the fourteen veterinary inspectors appointed have commenced duty. These four inspectors have been previously employed under exemption from the Public Service Act and Regulations for periods ranging from seven to eleven years, but have now been made permanent officers.

2. The ante and post-mortem inspection of animals intended for slaughter for export and the supervision of the treatment of meat intended for canning for export.

3. When they commence duty there will be six in Queensland, three in New South Wales, three in Victoria, one in South Australia, and one in Western Australia.

4. Department of Trade and Customs.

WAR GRATUITY.

POSITION OF NURSES.

Mr. BRENNAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

1. Is it a fact that Australian-trained nurses who were the first to respond to the request of the British Government that Australian nurses might offer themselves for service with the armies of Britain, do not participate on equal terms in the war gratuity with nurses who were attached to the Australian Imperial Force?

2. If so, why?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. Yes.

2. The Australian war gratuity is payable only to persons who served in the Australian Forces. The Australian nurses who served in the British Army receive the Imperial war gratuity, and also receive a grant from the Australian Government at the rate of £50 per annum for the period of their service with the British Army.

WOOL REALIZATION ASSOCIATION.

DIRECTORATE AND SALARIES.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

1. Whether it is correct, as reported in the press, that two directors of the British and Australian Wool Realization Association draw £10,000 each as salary?

2. How many directors are there in the company?

3. What are the salaries of these directors?

4. Are these salaries free of taxation?

Mr. HUGHES.—The British Australian Wool Realization Association Limited is a company registered under the Victorian Companies Act 1915. The articles of association govern the appointment of directors; the remuneration paid to the directors is provided for in the articles of

association; and the conduct of the business operations of the association are necessarily on similar lines to those of any public company working under the same Act. The Commonwealth Government are not concerned as to the number of directors or the salaries paid them, but Sir John Higgins, Chairman of the Australian Board, has in this instance very courteously supplied me with particulars which will enable me to reply to the questions asked by the honorable member. The replies are as follow:—

1. Yes; £10,000 per annum to the Chairman of the British Board, and a like sum to the Chairman of the Australian Board.

2. Eleven directors (five on the British Board and six on the Australian Board).

3. Each director £1,000 per annum, as provided for in the articles of association.

4. For ordinary directors—No. For the Chairman of the British and Australian Boards—Yes.

I am advised that the business of the association embraces, in addition to the disposal of wool and other assets of its own, large wool transactions as agent of His Majesty's Government, in which the Government of the Dominion of New Zealand and the Government of United South Africa are also interested. It, therefore, follows that the usual privacy between principal and agent must be observed. It is also stated that the business at present conducted by the association comprises 70 per cent. on agency account, for which a satisfactory rate of commission is paid to the association, and 30 per cent. on account of the association's own wool. The association's expenses are very largely paid for out of agency business, which promises to be materially increased in the near future, thus further reducing realization costs on Australian carry-over wool.

REV. J. B. RONALD.

Mr. MATHEWS asked the Prime Minister, upon notice—

1. In view of the fact that last year, when the member for Melbourne Ports referred to, the position of "Mr. Ronald's case," the Prime Minister said that he thought it was "a State matter," and that he would see the State Premier, has the Prime Minister done so, and what conclusion did he and the State Premier come to?

2. Does he think that it will be necessary for Mr. Ronald to report that the King's command to hold an inquiry into the allegations contained in Mr. Ronald's petition is invalid here?

3. Will he give Mr. Ronald an official reply to present in person to the King?

4. Has he read Mr. Ronald's petition and the affidavit accompanying it, and, if the latter be

true, does he think that a *prima facie* case for inquiry is made out; if not, will he take the responsibility of prosecuting Mr. Ronald for perjury?

Mr. HUGHES.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. I have been continually in touch with the Premier of Victoria in regard to the case of the Rev. J. B. Ronald, but the State Government is not prepared to take action in connexion with the matter.

2. The petition presented to His Majesty by the Rev. Ronald was referred, at the King's command, through the Governor-General for consideration; so far as I am aware, His Majesty did not command that an inquiry be held. As I have previously stated in this chamber, the Commonwealth Government had no jurisdiction in this matter, and, therefore, referred the case to the State Government.

3. Mr. Ronald has already been notified that his case is purely one for consideration by the State Government. The official replies are forwarded through the Governor-General to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

4. As already intimated, the Commonwealth Government has no jurisdiction in this matter.

WAR SERVICE HOMES.

ARCHITECTS' FEES.

Dr. MALONEY asked the Treasurer, upon notice—

1. Is it a fact that the Repatriation Department protested against the charge of £24 10s. per house made by Messrs. J. and H. G. Kirkpatrick, architects for the Commonwealth Bank, in connexion with the work?

2. Does any family relationship exist between the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank and members of the firm of Kirkpatrick, and, if so, what?

3. Is it a fact that one of the Kirkpatricks is a brother-in-law of Sir Denison Miller?

4. Is Sir Denison Miller's son employed by the firm of Kirkpatrick?

5. Is Sir Denison Miller's son financially interested in the firm of Kirkpatrick?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. No fixed charge of £24 10s. per house has been made by the architects, their fee being charged on a percentage basis, to the rate of which exception was taken by the War Service Homes Commissioner. The matter was referred, under the terms of clause 22 of the agreement between the Commission and the Commonwealth Bank for the arbitrament of the Auditor-General.

2, 3, 4, and 5. I cannot say. I would like to call the attention of the honorable member to the fact that the Government has nothing to do with the Governor in his employment of persons to carry on the operations of the Bank. As to the matter of his relations, I suggest any one interested in this matter might write to him direct.

WHEAT AND FLOUR.

Mr. MAKIN asked the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Will he provide the following information:—

- (a) The amount of wheat gristed into flour for the years 1917, 1918, 1919, and 1920, for the respective States of the Commonwealth?
- (b) The prices charged per bushel for such wheat during the above years?

Mr. HUGHES.—The information is being obtained, and will be furnished as soon as available.

PICTURE FILMS.

Mr. MAHONY asked the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

1. What quantity of picture films was imported into Australia during the years 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, and 1920 respectively?

2. The amount of duty collected upon such films during those years?

Mr. GREENE.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. Imports are recorded according to financial, and not calendar, years. Prior to 1916-17 films were not recorded separately, and it is, therefore, impossible to state the quantity imported. The imports for 1916-17, 1917-18, 1918-19, and 1919-20 were as follows:—

1916-17, 16,678,927 feet, valued at £273,986.
1917-18, 18,029,016 feet, valued at £292,030.
1918-19, 10,803,747 feet, valued at £163,196.
1919-20, 16,934,496 feet, valued at £236,494.

2. The duty collected during the same years was—

1916-17	..	..	..	£90,879
1917-18	..	..	..	68,536
1918-19	..	..	..	52,504
1919-20	..	..	..	73,092

COMPULSORY MILITARY DRILLS.

Mr. MAKIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

Whether the Government will consider the desirability of discontinuing compulsory military drills on Saturday afternoons, thus affording to Australia's youth the same opportunities as other sections of the community for recreation and pleasure?

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—The answer to the honorable member's question is as follows:—

As regards the Citizen Forces, it is not considered desirable to discontinue drills on Saturday afternoons. The number of days' home training required under section 127(e) of the Defence Act is only eight days. This home training period is divided up into whole-day, half-day, and night parades, the proportion of each varying according to the arm to which the trainee belongs and also to meet local con-

ditions and requirements in districts. Except in the case of Light Horse, this home training is done in half-day and night parades, the half days rarely exceeding ten; thus, leaving out the period spent in camp, the trainee has at least forty Saturday afternoons to himself. Special facilities are given in the country districts to the Light Horse to vary their parades so as to allow of as little inconvenience to any industry or individual as possible. To be of value, certain classes of training must be carried out in daylight, and if this is not done on Saturday afternoons, it would require to be done during the trainee's hours of employment, involving a loss of wages, which would be a distinct hardship. As regards Senior Cadets, the annual compulsory training required is 64 hours, 35 hours of which are carried out in the employers' time, the remaining 29 hours being performed in the cadets' own time. Four of the 29 hours are set aside for annual championship athletic meetings, and the remaining 25 hours are spread throughout the year, which is approximately 6 hours per quarter. The duration of parades held in the Senior Cadets' own time, for cadets who are attending schools, is, as a minimum, 2½ hours, and these drills are held on the weekly half-holiday. The Department does not think it equitable to ask employers to increase the number of drills held in the employers' time, which is the only procedure whereby a corresponding number of drills may be reduced in the cadets' own time. The policy of holding a certain percentage of drills in the employers' time opened up the way for the abolition of night drills, which step received the unanimous approval of all the boys' parents, and for the reduction of the number of parades held on the weekly half-holiday in the cadets' own time.

CASE OF THOMAS NICHOLSON.

Mr. BURCHELL asked the Treasurer, *upon notice*—

Whether he will lay on the table of the Library all papers in connexion with the pension claim of Mr. Thomas Nicholson, of 37 Sixth-avenue, Maylands, Western Australia?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—These papers are of a confidential and personal nature, and it is not considered that they should be placed in any position where they may be viewed by uninterested persons. If the honorable member so desires, he may view the papers at the Commonwealth Treasury at any time he may care to call.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE GRAVES.

Mr. CAMERON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

1. Whether the graves of all members of the Australian Imperial Force buried in the Desert of Sinai, Palestine, and Syria have been located?

2. Has the work of identification and establishment of central cemeteries been completed?
 3. Where are the central cemeteries situated?

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. Unfortunately, no. Some graves yet remain to be located.

2 and 3. Permanent cemeteries have been established as under:—

Egypt.—Chatby (Alexandria), Hadra, Cairo, Minia, Tel-el-Kebir, Suez, Ismailia, Kantara, Port Said, El Arish.

Palestine.—Dier-el-Balah, Gaza, Beer-sheba, Ramleh, Jerusalem, Haifa.

Syria.—Beyrouth, Damascus.

Later information than the above will be furnished to the honorable member when replies are received to the cabled inquiries now in course.

PACIFIC ISLANDS MAIL CONTRACT.

Mr. WEST asked the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

1. Will he give the date of the termination of the present contract for mails between Sydney, Lord Howe, and Norfolk Islands and the New Hebrides, and state the amount of subsidy paid for a two-monthly service.

2. Will he, before any new tenders are made, arrange for a monthly service as before the war?

3. Will he call for tenders to provide for a separate service between Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands and Sydney?

4. If not successful in obtaining suitable tenders, will he entertain the proposal to place Commonwealth steamers on the service?

5. Before any tenders are accepted, will he cause a revision to be made of freight and passenger rates?

Mr. HUGHES.—The answers are—

1. The present contract terminates on the 31st July, 1921. The subsidy for a two-monthly service is £12,000.

2, 3, 4, and 5. The question of a fresh contract is at present receiving attention, and the matters referred to by the honorable member will be given due consideration in connexion therewith.

SEAT OF GOVERNMENT.

COST OF ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDINGS IN MELBOURNE.

Mr. JAMES PAGE asked the Minister for Home and Territories, *upon notice*—

What is the total amount paid by the Commonwealth under the following heads in con-

nexion with the retention of Melbourne as the Seat of Federal Government:—

(a) Cost of building construction in Melbourne and its vicinity for administrative offices since Federation was established, and annual interest charge on same?

(b) Cost of acquisition of land and buildings in Melbourne and its vicinity for governmental purposes up to date?

(c) Total amount paid up to date for rent and interest in regard to administrative and other buildings connected with the retention of Federal parliamentary activities in Melbourne?

Mr. POYNTON.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are—

(a) Commonwealth offices, at corner of Gipps and Lansdowne streets, Melbourne.—Cost of building, including Treasury strongroom, £68,371. Victoria Barracks—Wing at northern end.—Cost, £42,517. Total, £110,888. The moneys for the erection of these buildings were provided out of revenue, and, therefore, no interest is chargeable.

(b) Area, at corner of Gipps and Lansdowne streets, for Commonwealth offices.—Cost of land, £7,242. Area, in Victoria-parade, Fitzroy, with buildings thereon, acquired for Commonwealth notes purposes.—Cost of property, £9,500. Total, £16,742.

(c) Rent.—Total amount, £171,305. (The rent payable in respect of the present financial year is £22,512.) Interest.—The Victoria Barracks property is entered in the "Transferred Property Schedule" at—Structure, £97,000; site, £25,000; total, £122,000; of which amount the Commonwealth pays the State of Victoria interest, at the rate of 3½ per cent. per annum, £4,270. This property has been, and is at present, occupied by Central Defence Administration and the 3rd Military District respectively, but it is not possible to allocate the interest charges against the two sections, i.e., Central Administration and 3rd Military District, as the space occupied by each has varied considerably from time to time.

PAPUAN OIL-FIELDS.

EXPERTS' OPINIONS: INDENTURED LABOUR—BORES.

Mr. BLAKELEY asked the Minister for Home and Territories, *upon notice*—

1. Whether it is a fact that Mr. J. Brown, when reporting on the Upoa oil-fields, stated that the structure on which the wells have been bored was not favorable for oil accumulation, and that all drilling operations under Dr. Wade's policy was suspended?

2. Is it a fact that there is a grave difference of opinion between Mr. Brown and Dr. Wade as to the interpretation of the structure as set forth in Dr. Wade's Report on Petroleum in Papua, 1914?

3. Is Dr. Wade still employed by the Commonwealth, and, if so, in what capacity?

4. What is the total cost of the oil-boring operations in Papua, prior to the Anglo-Persian Company taking control, for (a) plant and machinery, (b) labour?

Mr. POYNTON.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are—

1. Yes.

2. Yes. Mr. Brown worked on the data previously supplied by Dr. Wade, and came to the conclusion that there was no structure in the particular locality referred to good enough to warrant further testing. He considers, however, that much credit is due to Dr. Wade and his assistants for the pioneering work which they accomplished under most difficult conditions.

3. Yes, in so far as he has been given a retainer of £100 in consideration of the right to call upon him for occasional consultations in London during the year ending 31st December next.

4. The total cost of the oil-boring operations in Papua prior to the Anglo-Persian Company taking control was—

(a) For plant and machinery—£31,838.
(b) For labour—£51,845.

Mr. BLAKELEY asked the Minister for Home and Territories, upon notice—

1. Whether it is a fact that Mr. J. Brown, in reporting on the Papuan oil-fields, stated that, if immigration of Chinese or some other Eastern nation could be arranged for, labour in Papua would be considerably improved?

2. If so, will the Minister give the House an opportunity of discussing any system of indentured labour, other than Papuan, before an alteration of policy takes place?

Mr. POYNTON.—The answers are—

1. Yes.

2. It is not the intention of this Government to authorize any system of indentured labour other than Papuan.

On Thursday last the honorable member for Darling (Mr. Blakeley) asked me certain questions respecting the oil boring operations in Papua. I have looked into the matter, as promised, and am now able to supply the following information:—

As far as can be gathered from the reports received to date, no bores have actually been put down by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, its work having been confined to carrying out geological surveys and mapping, with a view to the selection of two or more favorable locations for drilling. So far, it has been decided to put down only one test bore, namely, at Popo.

The first step taken by the company was to examine all available maps and records of previous work performed on the Papuan oil-fields, following upon which it decided:—

1. To carry out a geological survey and examination of the Gulf Coast region north-west from Yule Island to the Kapuri River district; and

2. To re-examine Upoia and the neighbouring areas in the Valaila region, and to extend and correlate areas surveyed by Dr. Wade and the Commonwealth Oil-fields Geological Staff.

The maps examined were prepared by Dr. Wade, or under his supervision.

In the course of its re-examination, the company found certain indications which led it to disagree with Dr. Wade's conclusions in regard to some of the areas; but this disagreement was not such as to cast any reflection upon the work of Dr. Wade.

As a matter of fact, it was owing to the preliminary work performed by Dr. Wade, and to his recommendations, that a further examination was made of the Kira-Te Hills district, where very encouraging indications of oil have now been found.

PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Basic Wage—Royal Commission—Further Report dealing with the corresponding Cost of Living during the years 1915-1919.

Oilfields in Papua—Reports of Operations of Anglo-Persian Oil Company, January and February 1921.

League of Nations—Report by the Secretary-General to the First Assembly of the League on the work of the Council. (Paper presented to British Parliament.)

Public Service Act—

Appointments, &c., of R. P. Allen, R. Grant, J. M. Davidson, H. O'Boyle, J. J. Bourke, R. A. Dowling, F. V. Collins, R. H. Heywood, H. W. Bennetts, W. H. B. Finney, C. McNicol, C. W. Nye, E. J. Tomlin, Department of Trade and Customs.

Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1921, No. 12.

War Service Homes Act—

Land acquired at Campbelltown, New South Wales; Double Bay, New South Wales; Goulburn, New South Wales; Kogarah, New South Wales; Waratah, New South Wales (2).

IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

Debate resumed from 13th April (*vide* page 7427), on motion by Mr. HUGHES—

That the paper—League of Nations—Mandate for German Possessions in the Pacific Ocean situated south of the Equator, other than German Samoa and Nauru—be printed.

Mr. HIGGS (Capricornia) [9.35].—It is only on very rare occasions that the Commonwealth Parliament has the opportunity of discussing such an important question as that of the foreign policy of Australia. Indeed, too much of our time is occupied in the discussion of parochial matters which concern State Parliaments only. We shall never reach the heights

we ought to attain in this Parliament until we give less attention to many of the small matters with which we now deal, and take more profound interest in issues of largely national concern.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) hopes that every honorable member will "express himself freely on this question of the Imperial Conference, remembering only that every word said here in relation to other nations must be well weighed before utterance." I accept the right honorable gentleman's invitation on those terms, and I hope I shall say nothing to offend either Japan or the United States, to which I shall have reason to refer. If we desire the friendship of any nation, we must refrain from saying anything which is calculated to injure the feelings of its people. Anything I say about Japan or the United States of America will certainly be said with no idea of reflecting upon the people of those countries, or the eminent men controlling their destinies.

Australia will agree with the remarks of the Prime Minister concerning Japan. He says that we admire the bravery of its people, their splendid achievements in the arts of peace as well as their prowess in war, and that we desire to live in peace and friendship with them. But it is also true that we desire to keep Australia for the Australian people and the British, who have sacrificed so many lives and spent such a great deal of money in developing this country since the first settlement at Port Jackson in 1788.

Japan must remember that the Japanese islands are larger than the British Isles, with an area of 147,655 square miles, as compared with an area of 121,391 square miles. The population of the British Isles before the war was 45,000,000, and was, to that period, increasing at the rate of two to three millions per annum. Its population is now, I believe, about 42,000,000. Our objection to the permanent residence in Australia of Japanese immigrants is mainly economic and industrial. During the last twenty-five years we have endeavoured successfully to raise the standard of comfort and living of the masses. We do not hear anything to-day of anti-sweating leagues because the work of such organizations has been the means of successfully stamping out the employment of children of a tender age. We

have our Factories Acts limiting the hours of labour in industries, and Wages Boards, and Arbitration Courts, which have been so successful during the past quarter of a century in improving the lot of the mass of the people in Australia that we have set up a standard of comfort and living which is higher, perhaps, than in any other part of the world.

The Prime Minister has said that Japan has her ideals, and we have ours; and I believe that, as time goes on, the Japanese ideals will approach our own, because it is not so many years since the conditions prevailing in Japan as regards child labour obtained in the British Isles. It is certainly not more than 100 years ago.

Mr. HUGHES.—Child labour was common in Great Britain up to the sixties or seventies.

Mr. HIGGS.—That is so; and there is no doubt that, in time to come, the philanthropists and high-minded people of Japan will endeavour to stamp out the evils associated with factory life which are reported to obtain in that country. I trust that Japan will not be offended with me when I say that we appear to have done more for our working people than they have done for theirs. Quite recently, I wrote to the Government Statistician asking him to be good enough to supply me with a brief table in relation to our industries showing the hours during which workmen were employed, and the wages paid, in, say, Melbourne, as compared with one of the chief towns in Japan. I received the following reply:

Occupation.	Melbourne, Victoria (per day).		Nagoya, Japan (per day).	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Cabinet maker	13	4	..	4 8½
Cooper	17	4	..	5 1½
Blacksmith	14	4	..	4 1
Tinplate ware maker	12	0 to 14	2	3 5½
Flour maker	11	0 to 14	1	3 4½
Dyer	14	7	..	4 1
Shoemaker	13	8	..	4 1
Tailor	13	8	..	6 1½
Printer	13	0	..	3 5½
Brickmaker	11	8 to 13	6	3 0½
Clockmaker	13	0	..	5 1½
Harness maker	12	4	..	1 5½
Shipwright	17	0	..	4 6
Bricklayer	15	0	..	5 7½
Carpenter	14	8	..	4 6
Painter	13	4	..	4 3½
Paperhanger	13	4	..	4 6
Plasterer	14	8	..	4 6
Stonemason	13	7 to 15	11	5 8½

The number of hours worked are not given in the above letter, but the average in Australia may be taken as eight, whilst, I believe, in Japan, it would be at least ten hours per day. When we consider the wages we pay to waterside workers, coal lumpers, cloth workers, and women and girls, as compared with the Japanese rates, the difference is great indeed. The Australian wage-earners fear the competition of the wage-earning immigrant from Japan. The Japanese will more clearly understand the Australian point of view, if they follow what is appearing in the daily press. In Australia, they will see that the Trades and Labour Council in Sydney has arranged for Mr. J. Howie, the President of the Council, and Mr. W. P. Hearman, of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, to proceed to England to warn British emigrants not to come to this country. I believe the Prime Minister's Department is continually receiving from societies like the Building Trades Federation protests against bringing immigrants to Australia, so the Japanese will see that not only are the Australian workmen against Japanese labour coming to Australia, but they are even opposed to their own relatives coming from the Old Country. This policy is shortsighted, but it exists, and the objection in those constituencies where a Labour vote is strong enough actually to determine the class of representatives to be sent to the Federal and State Parliaments.

The Prime Minister mentioned the revival of the Anglo-Japanese treaty.

Mr. BAMFORD.—It was a renewal of the treaty.

Mr. HIGGS.—Yes, in a form acceptable to Australia and to the United States of America. I desire to say that I believe in the League of Nations. As an Australian born, I have had very little opportunity of living in a European atmosphere, and, consequently, know little of the racial hatred which prevails in Europe; and as a supporter of the League of Nations I may be taking up the position of a dreamer. I know that several of our public men have a very poor opinion of the League of Nations.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—They are afraid it is a League of Peace.

Mr. HIGGS.—Some of our public men are afraid that the League is not

likely to function, and that the covenant is a mere paper document.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—It is functioning.

Mr. HIGGS.—On the 8th July, 1920, a declaration was made by Great Britain and Japan in these words—

The Governments of Great Britain and Japan have come to the conclusion that the Anglo-Japanese agreement, dated 13th July, 1911, now existing between the two countries, though in harmony with the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations, is not entirely consistent with the letter of that Covenant, which both Governments earnestly desire to respect. They accordingly have the honour jointly to inform the League that they recognise the principle that if the said agreement is to continue after July, 1921, it must be in a form which is not inconsistent with that Covenant.

That declaration was signed at Spa on 8th July, and on being forwarded to the British Foreign Office was registered the same day. That action on the part of Great Britain and Japan is a silver lining to the gloomy clouds that have been hovering over a storm-tossed world. I cannot see that this document or agreement, if it is satisfactory to the League of Nations, can be unsatisfactory to the United States of America. I believe it is impossible that it shall be otherwise than satisfactory. Indeed, the present agreement between the United States of America and Japan has established a position under which it is impossible for Great Britain to quarrel with the United States of America.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Where is the honorable member's authority for that statement?

Mr. HIGGS.—In Article 4 of the present agreement between the United Kingdom and Japan, which reads—

Should either contracting party conclude a treaty of general arbitration with a third Power it is agreed that nothing in this agreement shall entail upon such contracting party an obligation to go to war with the Power with whom such treaty is in force.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—There is no treaty of arbitration in force between Great Britain and the United States of America. The proposed treaty was not ratified by the Senate.

Mr. HIGGS.—A treaty of arbitration between Great Britain and the United States of America was signed at Washington on 3rd August, 1911, or within a few weeks of the date on which the Treaty between Great Britain and Japan

was signed. That treaty has a preamble which, with the indulgence of the House, I shall read, because it states clearly the relationship between the people of the United States of America and Great Britain—

The United States of America and His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, being equally desirous of perpetuating the peace, which has happily existed between the two nations, as established in 1814—

Over one hundred and six years ago—

by the Treaty of Ghent, and has never since been interrupted by an appeal to arms, and which has been confirmed and strengthened in recent years by a number of Treaties whereby pending controversies have been adjusted by agreement or settled by arbitration or otherwise provided for; so that now, for the first time, there are no important questions of difference outstanding between them, and being resolved that no future differences shall be a cause of hostilities between them or interrupt their good relations and friendship.

The High Contracting Parties have therefore determined, in fartherance of these ends, to conclude a Treaty extending the scope and obligations of the policy of arbitration adopted in their present arbitration treaty of the 4th April, 1908, so as to exclude certain exceptions contained in that Treaty, and to provide means for the peaceful solution of all questions of difference which it shall be found impossible in future to settle by diplomacy. . . .

The treaty signed on 4th April, 1908, made certain exceptions, which were outside the treaty of arbitration; but this arbitration treaty of 1911 included all questions in dispute between the United States of America and Great Britain which could not be settled by diplomacy. I, therefore, cannot believe it possible that the United States of America and Great Britain will ever again fight each other.

I was pained to read the cabled reports of the speech made to Congress a few days ago by President Harding. I want to reiterate the statement that I would deplore any utterance calculated to hurt the feelings of that eminent man or, indeed, any American, and I hope not to make any such observation. But I think that there must have been some misunderstanding on the part of the responsible authorities in the United States of America who rejected the League of Nations Covenant, or failing that, that there must be objections which it ought to be possible to remove, since the United States of America has been

foremost in all movements making for peace. On 15th December, 1914, thirty-six States agreed with the United States of America—

That all questions of whatever character and nature in dispute between them shall, when diplomatic efforts fail, be submitted for investigation and report to an International Commission, and the contracting parties agree not to declare war or begin hostilities until such investigation is made and report submitted.

Nearly all the States which are members of the League of Nations signed that agreement.

President Harding, according to the cable message published in the press, said that the United States of America would take no part in the existing League of Nations, but would heartily join any association to promote peace. What is the League of Nations but an association to promote peace? The Covenant begins—

The High Contracting Parties, in order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war, by the prescription of open, just, and honourable relations between nations, by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all Treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another, agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations.

Then follow the articles of the Covenant. President Harding went on to say that America was ready to co-operate with other nations to approach the subject of disarmament, but prudence forbade her disarming alone. There is nothing in the Covenant to the League of Nations calling upon the United States of America or any other country alone to disarm. Article VIII. of the Covenant reads—

The members of the League recognise that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations. . . .

There is nothing in that article calling upon any country alone to disarm. The League of Nations at the present time is sending out what is known as a *Questionnaire*—a book of questions—to each State in the League, asking what their military and naval votes are, and the information thus obtained will enable the

Council of the League to suggest to them how they might effect this disarmament. When we remember the hundreds of millions of pounds which were spent before the war by the principal nations in maintaining their armies and navies in times of peace—when we think of the thousands of millions of pounds spent during the great war and the millions of lives that were sacrificed—surely we should be prepared to consider some method of bringing about a general disarmament which will relieve the people of the civilized world from the grievous burden of war expenditure which they will have to bear for many years.

Mr. RYAN.—There is no suggestion that that is part of the business of the Conference. The Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) did not say a word about the question of disarmament.

Mr. HIGGS.—I presume that, in the limited time at his disposal, the Prime Minister could not deal with all the questions to be submitted to the Conference, but I should be very disappointed if, among the many subjects discussed at that Conference, that of the League of Nations does not find a place. I believe that there will be at that Conference friends of the League, who will discuss the question of the extent to which it is necessary to maintain a large army and navy, in view of the agreement which has been entered into by Great Britain and the other parties to the Covenant.

There are several articles in the Covenant which are very attractive to the political student. Take, for example, the statement in Article VIII. that—

The members of the League agree that the manufacture by private enterprise of munitions and implements of war is open to grave objections.

The pronouncement on the part of the forty-three States is extremely important, because we are informed that the same private shareholders held shares in munition works in different countries, and it was to their pecuniary interest to see the nations fighting. Article 10 of the Covenant of the League of Nations is of great importance to those countries which fear that they may be subject to invasion. It reads—

The members of the League undertake to respect and preserve against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all members of the League.

If we in Australia have any fear of invasion, surely we ought to be satisfied to get some help from the forty-three States which comprise the League of Nations, and which include all the great Powers except the United States of America. I sincerely hope that the United States will yet see its way clear to join the League.

President Harding has said that he is willing to enter into an association of nations for the purpose of promoting peace, but in my opinion he would be wisely guided if he initiated a movement to induce the present members of the League to consider America's objections to the Covenant.

Article II reads—

Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise or effectual to safeguard the peace of nations.

The discussion which has been proceeding between Japan and America during the past five months regarding the Mandate over Yap, in the Caroline Islands, relates to a matter which might well be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations for the purpose of avoiding a quarrel between these two countries. Here is another article of the Covenant which must commend itself to those who wish to avoid war:—

The members of the League agree that if there should arise between them any dispute likely to lead to a rupture they will submit the matter either to arbitration or to inquiry by the Council, and they agree in no case to resort to war until three months after the award by the Arbitrators or the report by the Council.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Was it not the Council of the League which issued the Mandate over Yap to Japan?

Mr. HIGGS.—I do not know what nations were represented at the negotiations. There is a difference of opinion, I understand, and I regret that I am unable to give the honorable member any information upon the point. It may be that a full report of President Harding's speech will modify the construction which can be placed upon the cabled report that the United States will give no sanction to the League of Nations. I refuse to believe that the aims of the covenant of the League of Nations have not President Harding's sanction. What are they? They may be thus summarized:—(1)

Limitation of armaments; (2) a mutual guarantee of territorial independence; (3) an admission that any circumstance which threatens international interests is of international importance; (4) an agreement not to go to war till a peaceful settlement of any dispute has been tried; (5) the non-recognition of secret Treaties.

The Covenant of the League of Nations, I repeat, has been signed by forty-three States. I have here a statement which was made by Mr. Lloyd George in the House of Commons on the 8th November last. It sets out the names of the States which constitute the League, and I have inserted in round numbers the respective populations, the figures having been obtained from the *Commonwealth Year Book*, No. 13. It is as follows:—

Name of State.	Population.
Argentine Republic	8,000,000
Belgium	7,500,000
Bolivia (South America)	2,800,000
Brazil	27,000,000
British Empire (United Kingdom)	42,000,000
Canada	8,500,000
Australia	5,000,000
South Africa	
New Zealand	1,200,000
India (British)	244,000,000
Chile	3,800,000
Colombia	5,000,000
Czeche-Slovakia	
Denmark	3,000,000
France	39,700,000
Greece	4,800,000
Guatemala	2,000,000
Italy	36,700,000
Japan (not including Korea)	52,000,000
Japan (including Korea)	77,000,000
Liberia	1,800,000
Netherlands	6,700,000
Norway	2,600,000
Panama	400,000
Paraguay	1,000,000
Persia	9,500,000
Peru	4,600,000
Poland	
Portugal	5,900,000
Roumania	7,500,000
Salvador	1,200,000
Serb-Croat-Slovene State	
Siam	8,000,000
Spain	20,000,000
Sweden	5,800,000
Switzerland	3,900,000
Uruguay	1,400,000
Venezuela	2,800,000

In the course of his statement to the House of Commons on 22nd December last the Right Honorable A. J. Balfour indicated the changes which have been

made in the above list as the result of the meeting of the Assembly. He explained that Greece was not re-elected to the Council of the League, and that China had been elected to the vacant place. The following six States had been admitted to the League:—

Name of State.	Population.
Austria	52,000,000
Bulgaria	5,500,000
Costa Rica	450,000
Finland	
Albania	850,000
Luxemburg	250,000

I have not included China, because I am unable to say whether she is in the League. China, I understand, was elected to the Council, and I presume, therefore, must be a member of the League of Nations, although she is not included in the list which was read by Mr. Lloyd George to the House of Commons on the 8th November last.

I believe that the Covenant of the League of Nations, though it may appear to some in the present disturbed state of Europe to be unequal to the work which the League has set out to do, will, in the course of time, take a higher place in history than *Magna Charta*, which was obtained from King John by the barons of England so many years ago.

Dr. MALONEY.—*Magna Charta* was intended to benefit only one class, whereas the League of Nations Covenant will benefit all classes.

Mr. HIGGS.—The Covenant of the League states that each nation will endeavour to improve the conditions of the working classes, and to bring their wages to something more nearly approaching an equal level. In the opinion of the author of the book which I hold in my hand, the Covenant is of special interest to Australia. Sir Geoffrey Butler writes:—

It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of Article 1 in the Paris scheme. It is arguable that it is its most significant single measure. By it the British Dominions have their independent nationhood established. The Dominions will always look to the League of Nations Covenant alike as their declaration of independence and their Treaty of Versailles.

I ask leave to continue my remarks upon a future occasion.

Leave granted.

House adjourned at 10.10 p.m.

Senate.

Thursday, 21 April, 1921.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens) took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

PAPERS.

The following Papers were presented:—

Defence Act.—Regulations amended—Statutory Rules 1921, Nos. 69, 70, 73, 74, 75, 79, 80, 81.

Lands Acquisition Act.—Land acquired at Darlington, Western Australia, for Postal purposes.

Navy Losses.—Return showing losses of Ships and Auxiliary Ships of Royal Navy for period 4th August, 1914, to 11th November, 1918. (Paper presented to British Parliament.)

Papua—Annual Report for the year 1919-20. Public Service Act—

Appointments.—Department of Trade and Customs—R. P. Allen, R. Grant, J. M. Davidson, H. O'Boyle, J. J. Bourke, R. A. Dowling, F. V. Collins, R. H. Heywood, H. W. Bennetts, W. H. B. Finney, C. McNicol, C. W. Nye, E. J. Tomlin.

Promotion of J. R. Halligan, Home and Territories Department.

Shipping Casualties—Merchant Shipping, 1st July, 1914, to 31st December, 1918—Return of Shipping Casualties and Loss of Life for period ended 31st December, 1918. (Paper presented to British Parliament.)

Treaty of Peace (Germany) Act.—Regulations amended—Statutory Rules 1921, No. 78.

War Service Homes Act.—Land acquired in New South Wales at Campbelltown, Double Bay, Goulburn, Kogarah, Waratah (two notifications).

NORTHERN TERRITORY.

COST OF CLEARING AERIAL LANDING GROUNDS.

Senator FAIRBAIRN.—I ask the Minister for Defence whether it is a fact, as reported in the press, that it has cost a sum of £670 odd to grub out two trees in order to permit of the landing of aeroplanes in the Northern Territory?

Senator PEARCE.—The honorable senator intimated to me that it was his intention to ask this question, and I had the file looked up. As the extracts from it which I wish to read are somewhat lengthy, I think that, under the Standing Orders, I should ask leave to read a statement.—(Leave granted.)—I

should mention that there are two landing places in the Northern Territory—one at Fanny Bay, and the other at Katherine. I have here a number of extracts from the file dealing with the particular matter to which the honorable senator has referred. The first is a telegram dated 21st October, 1919, from Lieutenant Fysh, at Port Darwin, stating that the Fanny Bay site was the only suitable emergency site. Then, on the 25th October, a letter was sent to the Home and Territories Department asking for permission to use the Fanny Bay site, and stating the probable cost at about £100. There was then a wire from Lieutenant Fysh, stating that labour was costing 4s. per hour, and owing to the high rate the estimate of cost would be increased to £205. On the 30th October the following report was received from Lieutenant Fysh on the Fanny Bay landing ground.

The landing place is situated at Fanny Bay, and 2 miles out of Darwin in a northerly direction. The present obstructions which are being cleared are 700 yards wire fencing, two banyan trees, two large earth mounds, and several small trees on the edges of the site.

The work, which is being carried out by the Public Works Department, was begun at mid-day on the 27th October. A gang of twelve men are employed on the work, which is being pushed on as speedily as possible. The rate of pay is 4s. per hour, and a conveyance to and from the ground is supplied.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Motor car?

Senator PEARCE.—Yes, motor car. He then stated—

The high rates make the work very costly, but they are unavoidable. Mr. Kellaway, Superintendent of Public Works, estimates the cost to be £205, and the work to be finished about the 7th November.

On the 10th November, 1919, a further report was received from Lieutenant Fysh, who I may say is a flying officer, who was sent up to Port Darwin at the request of the Prime Minister's Department to make arrangements for the arrival of Sir Ross and Sir Keith Smith. He then stated:—

Work was started on the Fanny Bay landing ground on the 27th October; a gang varying from twelve to seventeen men were employed up to the 8th November, when the majority were knocked off, and four men left on to complete a few odd jobs.

The principal work done was the clearing of two large banyan trees and two earth mounds. The banyan trees proved very tough

work indeed, not being solid, and having a tangled mass of roots explosives had little effect. However, they were finally removed, as were the earth mounds. Seven hundred yards of fencing were also removed and stacked, post holes were filled up and the gravel from the mounds spread in a slight depression of the ground.

On the 15th November a further report was received on the cost of the Fanny Bay landing ground, showing that the estimate of £205 had been exceeded, the cost being £390. The report reads:—

The original estimate of the cost of preparing the Fanny Bay landing place was £205. This estimate was submitted to me by Mr. Kellaway, Superintendent of Public Works. Since this estimate was made, several unforeseen jobs have been carried out, such as the clearing of two large earth mounds, instead of one, marking circle and telephone lines, &c.

On the first day the men went on at £1 per day, but casual rates were demanded by the Union, which are 4s. per hour. A conveyance to and from the landing place had also to be provided.

The above mentioned rates are out of all reason, but they had to be paid if the work was to be done without a strike, and as the work was required immediately their demands had to be granted. The casual rate of 4s. per hour has been in force, I believe, for some months here.

Owing to the high wages (32s. per day) the total cost of clearing and finally fixing up has reached £390.

On the 4th December a telegram was sent from the Defence Department to Lieutenant Fysh asking for a statement of expenditure, and on the 5th of December a reply was received from Lieutenant Fysh that the total expenditure at Fanny Bay and Katherine reached £350. On the 6th December a further report from Lieutenant Fysh, intimating that the final cost of Fanny Bay was £449 2s. 5d., reads as follows:—

The figures £390 were given to me by Mr. Kellaway as the final cost of the Fanny Bay ground, but evidently one or two small accounts were overlooked, and a part of his salary which should have gone on was also omitted.

A detailed account of the expenditure will be prepared and forwarded on to you.

The total under the heading of Fanny Bay comes to £449 2s. 5d., as notified by the Sub-Treasury Account. Some of the accounts have only just come to hand.

It will be seen that the press report of this matter is inaccurate as to the cost, which is stated at £650, and also because the work included the removal of two large mounds and the erection of a tele-

Senator Pearce.

phone wire, as well as the removal of the banyan trees.

Senator WILSON.—Still the papers represent a great reflection upon the capacity of the officers concerned to estimate the cost of the work.

Senator PEARCE.—I quite agree with the honorable senator. It has to be borne in mind that at the time the work was undertaken Sir Ross and Sir Keith Smith were approaching Australia, and in the circumstances we had to surrender to the "hold up" and give whatever was asked.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

Report (No. 3) of the Printing Committee presented by Senator SENIOR.

GENERAL POST OFFICE, PERTH.

Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, with minutes of evidence, relating to the proposed extension of the General Post Office, Perth, Western Australia, presented by Senator NEWLAND.

LIGHTHOUSES.

WEST AUSTRALIAN COAST.

Senator HENDERSON (for Senator LYNCH) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Customs, upon notice—

Whether, in view of the fact that the Government expert, Captain Brewis, in his report on lighthouse improvement in the Commonwealth, eight years ago, recommended that twelve new lights be erected on the West Australian coast, and that nothing has been done since in the matter, while a number of lighthouses have been erected elsewhere, the Minister will explain why no action has been taken during the interval?

Senator RUSSELL.—The policy followed is to establish lights on the trade routes most used. Comparatively speaking, a very limited number of ships use the north-west coast of Australia from Fremantle northwards, although the coast from Fremantle to the south is frequently used, that being the shipping track from overseas to other States. Consideration is being given to the establishment of a high-powered light at D'Entrecasteaux, or in that vicinity, also for a light at Eclipse Island. In addition to these, a buoy will be established in Cambridge Gulf next financial year.

RADIO STATIONS.

Senator BAKHAP (for Senator KEATING) asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, *upon notice*—

1. What is the number of radio stations in the Commonwealth controlled and operated in the Commonwealth?

2. Which of such stations is the most powerful?

3. What is its radius of action?

4. What is the radius of action of the Port Darwin Station?

5. What other station or stations are there in tropical Australia, and with what radius of action?

Senator RUSSELL.—The answers are:—

1. (a) Twenty, exclusive of Naval Stations at Garden Island, Williamstown, and Jervis Bay. (b) Eight under the jurisdiction of the Administrator of the New Guinea Territory, Rabaul.

2. Perth and Sydney.

3. Two thousand miles normally, although up to 3,500 miles radius has been reached.

4. Six hundred miles during daylight. Distances up to 2,000 miles have been reached during the hours of darkness.

5. Broome, Wyndham, Port Moresby, Thursday Island, Cooktown, 600 miles during daylight, and up to 2,000 miles during the hours of darkness; Misima, 300 miles; Samaai, 400 miles; Townsville, 1,500 miles during daylight. (All distances are over sea.)

the names and addresses only of those who volunteered, but were not accepted or permitted to serve outside Australia. This proposal embraced putting the list on the market for sale in each of the States, and was estimated to cost not less than £25,000; and, after due consideration, the Cabinet decided not to proceed with it. Even if the compilation of such a list were approved, it would have to be printed to be of any use for public scrutiny, and it is calculated that, providing for only sufficient copies to meet such requirements, the minimum cost would be—Preliminary work by Defence Department, £5,728; printing 1,000 copies (just as cheap as 100), £4,500; total, £10,228; or not less than £10,000. It would take from eighteen months to two years to make the list available. It would never be complete owing to new arrivals in the country, who would require their particulars inserted as well as those who were temporarily absent at the time of compilation. After full consideration, it is not thought advisable to take action in the direction suggested by the honorable senator.

COMMONWEALTH LOANS.

FLOTATION AND TERMS.

Senator PRATTEN asked the Minister representing the Treasurer, *upon notice*—

1. What loans have been floated in London by the Commonwealth Government since 1st October, 1920?

2. Upon what terms, and how were such loans issued and subscribed?

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—The answers are:—

1. A loan of £5,000,000 was floated on 7th February, 1921, for Repatriation and other expenditure arising out of the war.

2. The loan, which bears interest at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum, was issued at a discount of £5 per cent. The instalments were made payable as follows:—

£5 per cent. on application.
£30 per cent. on 16th February, 1921.
£30 per cent. on 10th March, 1921.
£30 per cent. on 1st April, 1921.

Payment could have been made in full on 16th February, or any subsequent day under discount at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum. The loan is redeemable on 1st March, 1941, or at the option of the Treasurer, on or after 1st March, 1931.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

STATE LISTS.

Senator HENDERSON (for Senator LYNCH) asked the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

Whether the Government will decide on the compilation of a list giving the names of all persons who enlisted in each State in the Australian Imperial Force, and the names of such persons who have been killed, wounded, or missing; also the names of all persons who have offered for service in the Australian Imperial Force and been rejected. The lists to be kept in responsible custody in each State capital city, and open for public inspection on the payment of a small fee?

Senator PEARCE.—Without knowing exactly what form this list is to take, or what date is to be shown, it is impossible to give any accurate estimate of cost. A somewhat similar proposal was put forward on a previous occasion to compile and publish a list to show the war service, in very brief form, of those who served in the Overseas Forces, as well as

DEFENCE BILL.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from 13th April (*vide page* 7372), on motion by Senator PEARCE—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Senator ELLIOTT (Victoria) [3.18].—

I had hoped to have a little further opportunity of going into this measure before the debate was resumed. There are, to my mind, very grave and serious objections to the measure now submitted to us. One of the greatest objections is the attempt to import into our Defence legislation the whole of the Army Act which relates to the British Standing Army, and to make it applicable, without the Senate or Parliament having a chance to discuss it, to our Citizen Force, a Force which absolutely differs from the regular British Army. The British Army is recruited from men who volunteer, who are presumed to know what are the conditions of the Service they enter, and who accept with their eyes open the yoke of militarism; but in Australia, on the other hand, every man irrespective of his position or class, is compelled to submit to military discipline for a certain period. It is essential, therefore, that before imposing this yoke on our young manhood Parliament should examine every separate detail of legislation dealing with this particular matter. The Bill goes even further than the existing Army Act. It would be bad to import the British Act at one stroke, but if some notice had been given us, we might have deemed it our duty, as members of this Senate, to scrutinize the amending provisions more carefully. The Bill provides that not only shall the existing legislation of the British Parliament on the subject be adopted, but, as I have said, it goes further by insuring that every future amendment and regulation made under that Act shall be adopted by the Commonwealth. It is quite true that these regulations are to be subject to review, but who is going to keep watch? What will happen here is that any regulation which does not suit Head-quarters will be brought under the notice of Ministers, and steps taken to disallow it; while, on the other hand, if new regulations authorized by the British Parliament increase the power, already too great, which administrative

Head-quarters wields in the Commonwealth, we shall hear nothing about the matter until, perhaps, some scandal causes us to realize that we have been landed in a difficulty.

Senator DUNCAN.—Will these regulations be operative if they are not indorsed by this Parliament?

Senator ELLIOTT.—Apparently they will. As soon as a regulation is passed by the British Parliament it will, *ipso facto*, become operative under this Bill unless some steps are taken to disallow it.

Senator PRATTEN.—Do you not think that honorable senators ought to be supplied with copies of the British Army Act?

Senator ELLIOTT.—I think we should. If we had copies of the Act referred to, we should be able better to see what this Bill means. But quite apart from that, it is wrong in principle to introduce into this Parliament, which has the widest of self-governing powers, legislation to allow any other Parliament to make laws for us in matters of this kind. That, undoubtedly, is what the people who are responsible for this measure are aiming at. Apparently they do not want too critical an examination of provisions which they desire, rightly or otherwise, to introduce for the more effective discipline of our young manhood in military affairs. No doubt it would suit them much better if they could insure that legislation passed by the British Parliament should automatically become operative in the Commonwealth, although, as I have pointed out, the British legislation applies to Forces entirely different in character from those of the Commonwealth.

Senator WILSON.—Do your remarks apply to any particular clause of the Bill or the Bill as a whole?

Senator PEARCE.—The honorable senator is referring to clause 18.

Senator ELLIOTT.—That is so.

Clause 18 makes certain amendments to section 55 of the principal Act. Section 55 provides, with certain reservations, that the Military Forces shall at all times, whilst on war service, be subject to the Army Act, and the amendment sought by clause 18 is to insert the words, "or on duty." They are simple enough, no doubt, but they mean a very great deal, for their effect is to bring the Military Forces of the Commonwealth at all times within

the provisions of the British Army Act, and to that extent they abrogate our independence as a self-governing Dominion.

There is another very objectionable feature of the Bill, namely, the introduction of a proposed new section 21AB, which provides—

Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, persons who have been engaged on active service abroad may be—

- (a) appointed or promoted to be officers in the Citizen Military Forces, and may be granted such commissioned rank and allotted such seniority as are from time to time approved by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Military Board; or
- (b) appointed or promoted, as prescribed, to be warrant officers or non-commissioned officers in the Citizen Military Forces.

At present, appointments to commissioned rank in the Commonwealth Military Forces are reserved for those who have served three years in the Citizen Forces, such appointments and promotions to be in the order in which candidates pass the prescribed examination. This Bill sweeps all that away, and, in lieu, provides for the appointment or promotion of men who may never have been in the Australian Forces at any time, but simply have been on active service abroad.

Senator PRATTEN.—But is it not intended to apply to men of the Australian Imperial Force?

Senator ELLIOTT.—The clause does not say so.

Senator PEARCE.—It may apply to an Australian who has been with the Imperial Forces.

Senator ELLIOTT.—It may apply to the Australian or the Imperial Forces; and, in view of what I shall subsequently tell honorable senators, I think this is a matter which we should regard with very great suspicion. We could provide that preference in the matter of promotion should be given to the officers of the Australian Imperial Force, naming them as such. I am going to object strongly to any one who served with the British Army or in any other service getting appointments over the heads of our own men. Undoubtedly that is what this provision is aimed at.

Senator PEARCE.—The honorable senator would also exclude an Australian who had not served in the Citizen Forces

before the war, and who had served solely with the Australian Imperial Force.

Senator ELLIOTT.—That could be provided for quite easily, and at the same time provision made to prevent all possibility of abuse.

There is another objectionable provision in clause 10 of the Bill, which amends section 20A of the principal Act to make it read—

Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, an officer who is eligible for promotion to a higher rank, and who has served, as prescribed, on active service, shall, other things being equal, be granted preference in promotion to an officer of the same rank who is eligible for promotion to that higher rank, and who has not so served on active service. I cannot understand the meaning of the words "as prescribed," as the section as it now stands seems perfectly sound. Power is being taken to make any regulations which the Government may desire to suit particular officers to whom it is proposed to give preference. I cannot see the necessity for inserting the words "as prescribed." Similarly, I find that in the principal Act there is nothing to prevent the supersession of officers at the sweet will of the higher authorities. In my speech on the second reading of the Air Defence Bill I pointed out that it was admirable to provide that no officer should be dismissed without just cause, but so is it absolutely necessary that no officer should be superseded in the matter of promotion unless he was distinctly informed and given an opportunity of showing cause why he should not be so treated.

Senator COX.—Is an officer not so informed?

Senator ELLIOTT.—Not under the original Act.

Senator PEARCE.—He has to be notified in times of peace, but not during war time.

Senator ELLIOTT.—It is prescribed in the regulations that he shall be given notice.

Senator PEARCE.—In times of peace.

Senator ELLIOTT.—No reference is made in the regulations to times of peace. Moreover, in the regulations relating to the promotion of officers which were actually in force in France there is no such limitation, and I know they were absolutely disregarded by those in authority. That was because the point was

covered in regulations instead of being embodied in the Act, in which case any disregard was not illegal. The regulations are deliberately and contemptuously disregarded by those in authority.

Senator PEARCE.—Can the honorable senator mention a case where the regulations have been disregarded in times of peace?

Senator ELLIOTT.—I do not say they are disregarded in peace time, but the regulations should be equally applicable in war time, and should be embodied in the Act. In the Army Act there are provisions under which an officer who is injured or suffers any wrong as a result of the actions of his superior officers can appeal, and such appeal can ultimately reach the King, who has the final word in the redress of grievances. In our Act there is absolutely no such provision. It is true that there is a regulation which can be, and is, disregarded by those who have sufficient power. If it is necessary in the case of the British Army, where volunteers subject themselves to the harshest of discipline, how much greater is the obligation on us to insure the insertion of such a provision in our Act as will not be disregarded in times of peace or war.

At present the regulations provide that the ultimate Court of Appeal shall be the Military Board, which was constituted some time ago to take the place of the Commander-in-Chief. Our Military Board is similar to the British War Council, but the Army Act was not modified to dispense with an officer's right of appeal. An officer still has the right of appeal, notwithstanding that there is a War Council in Great Britain.

Senator REID.—What is the difference in the powers of the Board and the Commander-in-Chief in the matter of appeals?

Senator ELLIOTT.—A Commander-in-Chief never considered that he was the ultimate Court of Appeal, but admitted that he was under the control of Cabinet. When the Commander-in-Chief was dispensed with the Military Board was made the ultimate Court of Appeal.

Senator PEARCE.—So is the Army Council in Great Britain.

Senator ELLIOTT.—The provision in the Army Act which gives an officer the

right of appeal to the King has not been dispensed with.

Senator PEARCE.—Neither has the right to appeal from the Board to the Minister. His Majesty acts on the advice of his Ministers, and in Australia there is the right to appeal from the Board to the Minister.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Here an officer cannot appeal to the Minister.

Senator PEARCE.—There is that right, and I shall show the honorable senator that it is so.

Senator ELLIOTT.—There are admirable provisions in the Army Act which we are incorporating in our Defence Act; but there are others which should not be included.

Senator ROWELL.—There is no danger.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Not in some directions. Portions of the Army Act are included in this measure, and will be in force if they do not conflict with our own Act and regulations. We have a Military Board, and it would seem that by having such a Board, instead of a single man, such as Commander-in-Chief, there would be more likelihood of justice being done. But when we come to examine the *personnel* of the Military Board, what do we find? With the exception of those honorable senators who served in the Australian Imperial Force, I suppose that honorable senators are absolutely ignorant of the constitution of the Military Board in Australia. If my memory serves me accurately, it consists of the following members:—General Sir C. B. White, who during General Birdwood's term of command of the Australian Forces in France, acted as his Chief of Staff. When General Birdwood left us, and General Monash assumed command, General White washed his hands of the Australian Forces, and went off to become Chief of Staff of the 5th British Army. General Monash was thus left to improvise a Chief of Staff for himself, and to carry on the war as best he could.

Senator ROWELL.—General White could not have acted in that way "off his own bat."

Senator ELLIOTT.—I am telling the Senate the facts.

Senator PRATTEN.—Did General White get the "huff"? We can use plain language here.

Senator ELLIOTT.—I am not going to say what happened.

— Senator PEARCE.—The honorable senator should tell us the whole of the facts. His statement is a travesty of them.

Senator ELLIOTT.—The head of the Military Board here is General Sir C. B. White.

Senator ROWELL.—No. It is the Minister.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Associated with General White is Major-General Sellheim. He went to the war—

Senator FOSTER.—Not really.

Senator ELLIOTT.—He has absolutely no knowledge of the capabilities of any officer, but by the mere fact that he wears the returned soldier's medal he impresses people in the streets with the idea that he is a man who knows his job from beginning to end.

Senator PRATTEN.—Did he not get farther than London?

Senator ELLIOTT.—He got to Gallipoli for a couple of days. The honorable senator may accept that statement as an accurate one. Associated with him is Brigadier-General Forsyth. I would be the last to say a word against him, but he broke down badly in health at the first battle in which we were engaged in France. Consequently he has no knowledge of the later developments of the war, nor of the qualities exhibited by the Australian leaders, particularly during the last phases of the war. The other member of the Military Board is Colonel Thomas. As far as I know, he has absolutely no title to the rank which he holds, his service having been confined to the Pay Corps, in which he graduated through the various grades.

Senator PRATTEN.—What the honorable senator is saying is that there is not a man at the head of the Defence Department who has seen active service.

Senator PEARCE.—Senator Elliott knows very well that General Forsyth served right through the Gallipoli campaign.

Senator ELLIOTT.—I say that he broke down badly in health at our first battle in France.

Senator PEARCE.—In what year?

Senator ELLIOTT.—In 1916.

Senator PEARCE.—He had served all through the Gallipoli campaign. Why does not the honorable senator admit that?

Senator ELLIOTT.—I have said that he knows nothing of the later developments of the war in France. I admit that he served in Gallipoli, and that he

superseded me in command there, if the Minister wishes to know that. For General Forsyth I have the greatest admiration, but I submit that it is idle to nominally substitute a Board for a Commander-in-Chief, whilst actually continuing the old system. The only man on the Board who is in a position to speak authoritatively on the training which the Australian Forces received in France is General Sir C. B. White.

Senator PEARCE.—He is the officer who is charged with the training of our Forces here. The other officers mentioned by the honorable senator have nothing whatever to do with that training.

Senator ELLIOTT.—But this Board is the final Court of Appeal—the tribunal which has been substituted for the appeal to the King under the British Army Act.

Senator PRATTEN.—The honorable senator is now referring to Major-General Sellheim, Colonel Thomas, and Brigadier-General Forsyth.

Senator ELLIOTT.—If General White stood alone as commander of our Australian Forces, we should know who to blame when anything went wrong, and to whom credit was due when anything went right. But the existing state of affairs is a travesty of what it should be. Moreover, there is no need for it. We have here General Monash, who commanded the Australian Forces in France with the utmost success, and who excited the admiration of the whole world. He has not been admitted to the Board—

Senator PEARCE.—But he was consulted about the divisional appointments.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Since the Minister has raised that question, I have the best authority for saying that, although General Monash has been consulted upon numerous occasions, upon no occasion has his recommendation been followed.

Senator PEARCE.—The honorable senator is wrong there. I have the signature of General Monash to his recommendations, and I can produce it.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens).—The honorable senator appears to be indulging in a criticism of the administration of the Defence Department, rather than in a discussion of the main principles of the Bill.

Senator ELLIOTT.—We are now considering certain amendments of our Defence Act, and if that measure requires to be amended in directions other than

those set out in the Bill, surely I am in order in calling attention to the fact.

SEVERAL HONORABLE SENATORS.—Quite right.

Senator GARDINER.—But the President says it is quite wrong.

THE PRESIDENT.—The honorable senator is at perfect liberty to refer to the administration of the Defence Department for the purpose of illustrating his argument, but he has been going beyond that.

Senator PRATTEN.—Does Senator Elliott say that the Military Board will administer the British Army Act as applied to our Forces, and that, beyond the Board, there will be no appeal?

Senator ELLIOTT.—That is how I read this Bill.

There is one provision in the Bill which is of an admirable character. It is contained in clause 19, and reads—

After section fifty-five of the Principal Act the following section is inserted:—

“56. The application of this Act shall extend to members of the Military Forces who are serving outside the limits of the Commonwealth.”

I am not quite sure that such a provision is constitutional. I am not certain that we have power to extend our Defence Act to wherever our Forces may be serving.

Senator PEARCE.—Upon a transport for example?

Senator ELLIOTT.—Is that the intention of it?

There is another provision to which I wish to invite attention. It is a proposed new section embodied in clause 29 of the measure which provides that no person shall, unless lawfully entitled thereto, amongst other things, sell any badge, and provision is made for a penalty of £50. We are legislating for the youths of the Commonwealth, and here is proposed an absolutely savage penalty of £50 if a boy sells his badge or gives it to his best girl.

Senator REID.—Not “gives”?

Senator ELLIOTT.—Yes, the proposed new section makes use of the words “Offer for sale, sell, use, wear, barter, exchange, trade in, give away, or in any manner whatsoever dispose of.”

Senator PRATTEN.—Is not £50 the maximum penalty and not the minimum?

Senator PEARCE.—Yes.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Even if it is the maximum, is there any justification for it?

Senator PEARCE.—Suppose a man sells his Victoria Cross?

Senator ELLIOTT.—This provision does not refer to Victoria Crosses.

Senator Cox.—Yes it does.

Senator ELLIOTT.—In any case, if a man wishes to give away his Victoria Cross why should he be fined £50? Under the proposed provision, if the mother of a deceased soldier wears his medal she may be hauled into Court and fined £50.

Senator REID.—No. There are many mothers wearing their sons’ medals now.

Senator ELLIOTT.—There is a provision in the existing law which permits the female relatives of a deceased soldier to wear his decorations. But that provision is to be repealed by clause 21 of the Bill now before the Senate.

Senator PEARCE.—No.

Senator REID.—The Minister says “No.”

Senator ELLIOTT.—Then he has not read the Bill.

Senator PEARCE.—If the honorable senator had read it as often as I have done, he would not be making the speech he is now making.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Honorable senators will see, by reference to the memorandum showing the alterations proposed to be made in the existing Act, that under sub-section (2) of section 80E of that Act, it is provided that—

Nothing in this section shall prevent a female relative of the person upon whom a military decoration has been conferred from wearing the decoration after the decease of that person.

It is proposed by the Bill now under consideration to repeal that provision, and I have indicated how an unfortunate widow or mother is going to be dealt with.

Senator FOSTER.—The female relative of the deceased soldier cannot, under this Bill, even wear the ribbon of his decoration.

Senator ELLIOTT.—That is so. She could not even wear the ribbon. The Minister’s interjection shows that he has not read the Bill, but has swallowed it whole from his advisers.

I proceed now to refer to the necessity for inserting in the Bill some new provisions, on the lines of the Army Act, for the due protection of officers and men who are compelled by the law of the country to serve in our Forces. I hope that the Minister will see his way to accept my suggestions in this connexion. The

amendments I propose have been hurriedly prepared, and I trust that some more able person will draft them into shape. I trust that they will be embodied in the Bill, and provision made to enforce them by such sanctions as no officer in peace or in war will be prepared to disregard. I intend to propose, in connexion with the consideration of complaints, that—

If an officer whose duty it is to investigate such complaints shall wilfully or knowingly disregard the provisions of this Act, or any regulations for the redress of grievances, he shall, upon proof thereof, be deemed unfit to serve His Majesty in any capacity whatsoever.

That is a drastic provision; but I do not think honorable senators will consider it too severe.

Senator ROWELL.—It is more drastic than the Army Act.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Such a provision is not in the Army Act; but I think that our law should, in this regard, be more drastic than the Army Act. Whilst in words the provision I suggest may appear to be more drastic than the Army Act, it is actually not so, inasmuch as under the Army Act the King has power to say to any officer that he shall not serve him any longer. We have not that power here, and we should have a somewhat similar provision in our laws. I intend, also, to propose that—

If an officer shall, by means of any promise, threat, representation, or other means, induce or persuade any complainant not to proceed with a complaint or appeal which he has made to such officer, or of which such officer shall have knowledge, then, in addition to the last-mentioned disqualification, such officer shall be liable to an action for damages at the suit of the complainant in any Court in Australia.

As a matter of fact, the civil Courts have always regarded the Army as a body to whom the general law of the land does not apply. They say, in effect, "Here is a body of men who, with their eyes open, volunteer to submit themselves to discipline, and with the enforcement of that discipline the civil Courts have nothing to do." There are some very important limitations of that policy, since the Courts will not allow the Military to go too far. I can cite some cases to indicate those limitations. Some time ago, a man sued his Colonel for flogging him. The Colonel set up the plea that it was the custom of the Service to flog a man.

Senator ROWELL.—Was this an Australian officer?

Senator ELLIOTT.—No; this occurred in the British Army. The man brought an action for damages, and the custom of the Service was pleaded by the Colonel. The evidence showed that it was customary to give a man fifty lashes, whereas the Colonel had given this particular man 500 lashes. The civil Court, very properly, found that that was an abuse of the disciplinary powers of the Army Act, and the Colonel had to pay £1,000 damages. Whenever any case of the kind has occurred, there has been a general howl, suggesting that the interference of the civil Courts would be the ruination of military discipline. That claim was set up in a very famous case, known as Frye's case, which occurred so long ago as 1743, and of which I can give honorable senators the facts. It is a leading authority respecting the liability of all who are parties to illegal sentences passed by courts martial. These are the facts of the case:—

Lieut. Frye, of the Marines, was brought to a court martial at Port Royal, in Jamaica, by his captain for disobedience in refusing to assist another lieutenant in carrying an officer prisoner on board ship without a written order from the captain. Part of the evidence produced against Lieut. Frye at the court martial consisted of depositions made by illiterate natives whom he had never seen or heard of, and reduced into writing several days before he was brought to trial; and upon his objecting to the evidence he was browbeaten and overruled. Lieut. Frye was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment and rendered for ever incapable of serving His Majesty, though the Court had only power to award two years' imprisonment. On his arrival in England his case was laid before the Privy Council, and the punishment remitted by His Majesty.

Some time afterwards he brought an action in the Court of Common Pleas against Sir Chaloner Ogle, the president of the court martial, and obtained a verdict in his favour for £1,000 damages. The Chief Justice Willes, moreover, informed him that he was at liberty to bring his action against any of the other members of the court martial. Accordingly Lieut. Frye obtained writs against Rear-Admiral Mayne and Captain Renton, which were served on them at the breaking up of another court martial held on Vice-Admiral Lestock, at Deptford, at which they were members.

The members of this court highly resented this proceeding, and drew up resolutions in which they expressed themselves with some acrimony against the Chief Justice, and forwarded them to the Lords of the Admiralty. In these resolutions they demanded "satisfaction for the high insult on their president

from all persons how high soever in office, who have set on foot this arrest or in any degree advised or promoted it." The Lords of the Admiralty laid the resolutions before His Majesty, and the Duke of Newcastle, by His Majesty's command, wrote to the Lords of the Admiralty expressing "His Majesty's great displeasure at the insult offered to the court martial, by which the military discipline of the Navy is so much affected; and the King highly disapproves of the conduct of Lieut. Frye on the occasion."

That was pretty strong.

The Chief Justice, as soon as he heard of the resolutions of the court martial, caused each individual member to be taken into custody, and was proceeding further to assert and maintain the authority of his office, when the following submission (signed by the president and all the members of the court martial on Vice-Admiral Lestock) was transmitted to him:—"As nothing is more becoming a gentleman than to acknowledge himself to be in the wrong so soon as he is sensible he is so, and to make satisfaction to any person he has injured, we therefore, whose names are underwritten, being thoroughly convinced that we were entirely mistaken in the opinion we had conceived of Mr. Chief Justice Willes, think ourselves obliged, in honour as well as justice, to make him satisfaction as far as in our power. And as the injury we did him was of a public nature we do in this public manner declare that we are now satisfied the reflections cast upon him in our resolutions of the 16th and 21st May last were unjust, unwarrantable, and without any foundation whatsoever; and we do ask pardon of his lordship and of the Court of Common Pleas for the indignity offered both to him and the Court." This paper was dated the 10th November, 1746, and on its reception in the Court of Common Pleas was read aloud and ordered to be registered "as a memorial," said the Chief Justice, "to the present and future ages that whosoever set themselves up in opposition to the law, or think themselves above the law, will in the end find themselves mistaken."

Senator GARDINER.—I think that that should be put into Orders, and sent to the whole of our military officers.

Senator ELLIOTT.—That law is in force here, but the Courts make very fine distinctions. If a man is injured in his property or person by the imposition of excessive punishment in the way of flogging, fines, or imprisonment, the Courts will interfere, no matter what protests are made about the danger to discipline. But where a man suffers injury only in his military reputation by being superseded, or otherwise dealt with, the civil Courts will not interfere. The ground they gave was the ground I have given to the Senate, that a man goes into it with his eyes open, and must take the consequences; he cannot squeal. That posi-

tion is very different from ours. We compel every member of our community to undergo this discipline, and, therefore, any injury to an officer in his military reputation or character hurts him in a far wider sense than in the case of the British Army, which is only an infinitesimal portion of the population. Every man in this country is, or will be, a member of the Forces. Any injury done to an officer in that way which affects his military character or reputation, will inevitably reflect upon him in his civil capacity. We should, therefore, enlarge the law so that civil remedies will be given to every officer who suffers injury whether in his military reputation or character or in his civil character, or property, or person, where he is already protected by the common law.

Senator PEARCE.—Appointments to courts martial would be very popular under those conditions, would they not?

Senator ELLIOTT.—There is absolutely no fear so long as the officers act fairly, and without any improper motive. I do not suggest that any officer should be punished for acting in good faith.

Senator PEARCE.—Of which, under your amendment, they are not to be the judge, but somebody else is.

Senator ELLIOTT.—The judges of their conduct will be the same men as are the judges of the conduct of anybody else at the present day. Every day in the Courts the question is tried of whether an act is done maliciously or improperly. If a man has acted *bona fide* and honestly, he has nothing to fear either under my amendment or under the common law.

Senator ROWELL.—Or under the Army Act either.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Or under the Army Act, either.

Senator ROWELL.—They have the right of appeal to civil Courts in certain cases. There was a case a few weeks ago where a permanent officer appealed to the civil Court in New South Wales.

Senator ELLIOTT.—I fancy that he appealed but did not succeed. The position is that where the Court decides that only a man's military reputation is affected, the civil Courts will not interfere. While that law is properly applicable in England to a voluntary Force, it ought not to apply to a Force like ours, in which every man is compelled, willy-nilly, to serve.

Let me give honorable senators some idea of the wrong that can be done by people in a position of authority, and the impunity with which the regulations as they now exist can be disregarded. We have in existence an absolute regulation, which can be produced to any Court, providing that no officer shall be superseded unless he is notified of it, and is given an opportunity of showing cause against it. I am reluctant to bring in anything of a personal nature; but I want to show the Senate that I have had bitter experience of this sort of thing. I joined up with the first of those who went to the war. I had certain success, and eventually became a senior officer available for promotion to a divisional command. I may say that just about that time I had certain differences of opinion with both General Birdwood and General White, and, thinking there was no harm in it, and being a free man, I had expressed my opinions with the utmost freedom. This final incident, however, occurred. In March, 1918, the Fifth British Army was shattered by the German attack at the end of the month, and I received orders to march south to assist in repelling the attack. I reached a place called Doullens at about 3 o'clock in the morning, detrained our troops and marched them all night under orders to take over a billeting area in a certain district. We arrived at the village at daylight. I found that the area, which had been said to be completely cleared of British troops, was packed to the utmost of its capacity with fugitives from the British Army, and, in addition, a small nucleus of officers. I went and found the senior officer of the Forces there, and discovered him to be an acting staff-captain of a certain British Brigade. To quote from my report on the matter to Major-General Hobbs, my divisional commander —

About 9.30 a.m., together with Major Wootten, of your staff, and my own staff, I went to the chateau at Hedauville, after reconnoitring a line for outposts in the vicinity of Senlis. I found the chateau literally packed with officers, all of whom were still in bed, and the village full of details of two brigades. At my request Major Wootten interviewed a staff officer, who appeared to be in command. The latter, who was still in a very undressed state, stated that he had no orders whatever about leaving, and until he did so he could not move.

He stated that there were "plenty of other buildings" in the village for me to take as headquarters, without turning them out.

I said I had no desire whatever to turn them out, but pointed out that my orders re-

ceived from you were to occupy the village of Hedauville with two battalions, and unless his details moved there would not be any accommodation for my men. I would mention that a large number of the latter had travelled all the previous day, and then marched all night from Doullens to Harponville, arriving there at about 5.30 a.m. on the 29th, an 18-mile march.

We were also under orders to be ready to go into the line on an hour's notice.

By this officer not being ready to move out, these men were forced to halt in the fields, sodden with rain falling at the time, and wait his convenience.

Not wishing to appear the least unreasonable, I told him in Major Wootten's presence that I would try to get a building for headquarters, and leave the men outside until mid-day, whilst he was getting orders.

I asked him where his division was. He said it was at Senlis. I reported the situation by telephone.

I found a ruined school-house with all the windows shattered by shell fire, and with the yard defiled by human excrement.

I remained here, wet through, until about midday. Meantime I had sent my intelligence officer to Senlis to get in touch with the division.

He returned about midday and informed me that he had been to Senlis, and that the division had gone to Toutecourt, leaving two brigades in line under the division, whose headquarters were at Varennes. He met, however, at Senlis a major of the Machine Gun Corps. His remarks on the subject of the division were literally unprintable. He said he cursed the day he was born a fellow-subject of such men. He stated that his Machine Gun Battalion had been attached to them in the line; that they had retired without informing him—"ran away" he put it—and, as a result, he had men and guns captured.

My intelligence officer then inquired of the division at Varennes regarding these details at Hedauville. It was the signal officer that he spoke to. My recollection of the result was that he knew little of them, and cared less, for they had been nothing but a nuisance since they were attached to the — Division.

I then sent for the acting staff captain and asked him had he received any orders yet.

He replied that he had not. I asked why he had not telephoned or gone to Varennes to find out.

He replied that he had no telephone. I told him that I had a telephone he could use, and then, being irritated by his listless manner and want of interest, and by the fact that my men were being drenched to wait his convenience, I told him that I had formed a most unfavorable opinion from what I had heard of his division, and that his own want of energy and initiative were strong confirmation of what I had heard, and that unless he got orders and moved his men out of the village immediately, I would assume command and march them out of the village, if necessary, under arrest. He then got a "move on," and about 2 p.m. was clear of the village.

At 6.30 p.m. we were told that we should be at "3-hour" notice. We had just settled to rest when at 7.30 p.m. we were ordered to march within an hour to Corbie to "guard the right flank" of the Third Army.

I at once arranged for this march, called in the outposts and patrols, which had pushed on to Mesnil, and in a car provided by division moved to Franvillers, where I met General Monash. He expressed great astonishment that the men were marching, as Corps had informed him that busses were being provided.

He directed me to push through Corbie both north and south, and hold the line of the Somme. The men who had furthest to go did not reach the position until 5 a.m., after having marched, since passing the starting point, a distance of 26 miles. Not one man in the whole brigade fell out, but at the end were utterly exhausted. For this fatigue this staff officer was largely responsible. Three hours later they had to be roused and sent into action, as the enemy attacked Hamel.

I should be the last to place undeserved reprobation upon any one. On the other hand, I feel strongly that the shielding of incompetent officers and unworthy conduct of individuals, particularly staff officers, can do no good, but adds to the difficulties we are in. I gladly testify to the most gallant conduct of the cavalry of the Third Cavalry Brigade. I shall be glad to give evidence in any Court of Inquiry that may be held in the instance I have mentioned.

That report was addressed to Major-General Hobbs in response to a complaint which this officer had made, and which General Birdwood had received instructions to investigate. Honorable senators will hardly believe the sequel, but this is what happened. Three weeks later General Hobbs called to see me. He said, "I want to speak to you privately," and took me out into the garden. He then said to me, "General, I have instructions to tell you that while you are in the Australian Imperial Force you will receive no further promotion by reason of your conduct to the officers." When he said that, I turned away rather dumbfounded, and he struck me on the back and said, "I have got to tell you that; but, by God! you were right." It turned out that this staff officer was the son of a Duke, and "put the acid" on General Birdwood for my conduct, and you see the result. Notwithstanding that, I did not worry very much.

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—Was that conversation with General Hobbs private or public?

Senator ELLIOTT.—Private, but he spoke to me officially as my commander. He did not say it was confidential, if that is what the honorable senator means.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens).—Order! The honorable senator's time has expired.

Extension of time granted, on motion by Senator Pearce.

Senator ELLIOTT.—The sequel was that three weeks or so later I was informed that General Gellibrand, who was my junior officer, was to be promoted over my head, although the regulation which was then in force contained the provision to which I have referred.

Senator PEARCE.—He was promoted to command the division?

Senator ELLIOTT.—The regulation provides that certain action may be taken by an officer who has been superseded by the appointment of a junior officer over his head, as in my case. Accordingly, I wrote to General White, drawing attention to the regulation, and, expressing surprise that an opportunity had not been given to me of stating my case. I have his letter—

Your letter has greatly pained me; but I refrain from a detailed reply, as I hope to substitute a visit to you, and perhaps you may wish to withdraw something of what you have written. There are one or two points upon which I must touch. . . . Supersession is an act which is only possible within an established unit—the battalion, to wit. Once an officer is out of the regulation list his future employment is determined by selection, and if he is not selected he is not informed of the fact.

I had, in my letter to him, informed him that I proposed to test the validity of the action taken in my case by appealing to the Minister. This is the way he treats that statement—

Finally, you actually threaten me with political influence. You have obviously written hurriedly, and I am therefore not going to regard your letter as written. But let me say this: If the decision rested with me, I should send you off to Australia without the least hesitation if, calmly and deliberately, you repeated your assertion to seek political aid. And if you managed to raise a dozen political and "military" inquiries, I would fight you to a standstill on them.

The position, therefore, was that I had either to submit or be returned to Australia as undesirable. We were then preparing for the big attack on the 8th and 9th August, so if I had accepted the terms and come back to Australia, where would my reputation have been with my men? Now, the first instruction to a recruit is that, as a soldier, if he gets an

incorrect order, he must carry it out and complain afterwards. I said nothing until the armistice, and then approached Major-General Hobbs, who had become my corps commander in succession to General Monash, who by this time had gone to London to arrange for the return of our troops. I may say that at that time, and subsequent to the events I have mentioned, General Hobbs and General McCay, under whom I had served previously, had repeatedly, and in the most marked manner, expressed their belief in my capacity to command. As a matter of fact, I omitted portion of General White's letter which may be of some interest in that respect—

Do you think that any one doubts your courage? No one in the Australian Imperial Force, I assure you. Or your ability? It is well known. But you mar it by not keeping your judgment under complete control.

By not "kow-towing," in other words, to unworthy staff officers with political and social influence.

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—But, apparently, you were threatening to use political influence yourself, by saying that you intended to appeal to the Minister.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Yes, because under the Defence Act regulations, the Minister for Defence is the ultimate Court of Appeal.

Senator PEARCE.—I am glad to have that admission. Hitherto, you have denied it.

Senator ELLIOTT.—There was absolutely nothing against me on the score of capacity to command or lead, so honorable senators will see that the regulations should be very carefully scrutinized in order to prevent injustice, and to give an officer a chance to have his case reviewed. At present, when the real test comes, they prove futile.

I come now to a later stage in the story. On my return to Australia, I was appointed to the corresponding command which I had held in the field, the 15th Brigade, here. Under the provisions of the Defence Act, officers of the Citizen Forces can only be appointed by promotion from the ranks, and promoted to higher ranks, in accordance with the regulations; but recently, when certain divisional commands were being allotted, this course was departed from. Sir John

Gellibrand was then in Tasmania, and at a send-off dinner he said that the reason he had accepted a position in Victoria was that he had been promised a divisional command. I asked the Minister at the time if this was so, and he denied that any promise had been given.

Senator J. D. MILLEN.—I do not think Sir John Gellibrand said that he was promised a command. I think he said he was going over to take some position.

Senator ELLIOTT.—His words were, "I have been promised a command," and when I questioned the Minister on the subject he said he assumed Sir John meant that he was coming over to Victoria in order to be available for a command, notwithstanding the fact that his appointment would be absolutely illegal. In order that I should not lose my rights by sleeping on them, I at once wrote to the Board and asked why I had been again superseded. My letter was dealt with in due course, and this is the reply I received from General Brand—

I am commanded by the Military Board to acquaint you, for the information of Colonel (Hon. Brigadier-General) H. E. Elliott, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., D.C.M., with reference to your C. 21/8, of 16th March, 1921, that the further representations made by that officer have been considered by the Board.

The Minister now says that he can be appealed to; but the Military Board disagree with the Minister, and say that I have to take their ruling. My reading of the Act is that Cabinet, the King in Council, and in Australia the Governor-General in Council, is the ultimate Court of Appeal. I want to point out that on the Military Board there is only one man, General White, who can speak with authority. I have appealed from him to himself, and honorable senators can see the result. Surely there is something wrong in regulations which allow this. I had asked the Board for an inquiry to be held before a Judge of one of the civil Courts, and they raised the cry that was raised 200 years ago and was dealt with by a British Chief Justice—

Quite apart from this aspect of the case, it has never been customary, nor is it at all advisable, that a purely military matter should be inquired into by a Supreme Court Judge, or other civil Commissioner.

For 200 years it has been the custom to overrule harsh decisions of military officers.

Senator WILSON.—And that practice ought to be continued.

Senator ELLIOTT.—It ought to be extended. I am endeavouring to convince honorable senators of the absolute necessity of testing illegal and arbitrary acts by military officers in the civil Courts of the country. General Brand's letter continues—

I am further to say, in reference to the contention of Brigadier-General Elliott, that he has been superseded—(a) It is the custom of the Service to promote senior officers, and appoint them to commands by selection, and not seniority. Frequently the choice lies between several good and well-qualified officers, and those not selected can have no just right or cause to cavil at the action of those whose duty it is to make the selection.

There is no doubt about the general proposition. There ought to be power to select, and where the choice lies between officers equally qualified, it is obvious that the appointment ought to go to the senior officer, otherwise an officer senior in the Service might be called upon to take his orders from a junior; and no man would care to get a slap in the face like that, especially when, as in my case, neither the courage nor the capacity of the senior officer is called into question.

Senator WILSON.—No wonder the privates growl a good deal about military discipline when officers get treated like that.

Senator ELLIOTT.—That is the point I am trying to make. If, under the regulations, an officer in my position and of my standing can be treated with contumely, what chance has a junior officer or a private of getting justice?

I think I have said enough to convince honorable senators that the Act requires more drastic amendment than is provided for in the Bill now before the Senate, and I trust that when I move certain amendments in Committee I shall have their support, in order to do away with the possibility of such things occurring in the future. As far as I am concerned, the matter will not affect me, because I am so sick of the whole business that I have sent in my papers. I shall no longer serve in the Citizen Forces of the Commonwealth under the present heads. But I have a boy ten years of age who will ultimately have to undergo training under these conditions, and, so far as I can insure it, the conditions are going

to be better than they are at the present time.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [4.35].—I did not intend to address myself to this measure, for the very good reason that we were debating an Air Defence Bill when the discussion was interrupted by what occurred in another place. To my surprise, I discovered on perusing the notice-paper to-day that we were going on with a new measure, and I was not disposed to address myself to so important a question on such short notice. I cannot see any reason why the Senate should not take up the business where it left off, as we were prepared to deal with the measure that was under discussion when we last adjourned. This is a very important Bill, and there are important clauses in it, which, I suppose, can be dealt with in Committee.

Senator PEARCE.—I have no intention of going beyond the Committee stage to-day. When we reach the first clause in Committee, I shall be prepared to report progress and to allow the discussion on the other measure to be resumed.

Senator GARDINER.—I am very glad to have the Minister's assurance that such will be the case, because I was afraid, in view of the speed at which he generally travels, that this measure would be dispensed with by the dinner hour.

I am sure that the Australian people will be very grateful to Senator Elliott for the glimpse he has given us of military life, and I can quite understand how very keenly he feels the position, particularly when absolute injustice is done to non-commissioned officers or men in the ranks by not giving them the right to appeal. It offends one's sense of fairness that any man should have the right to mete out to another what he considers to be justice, and that there should be no means by which the case can be tried on its merits. I will welcome any amendment that will lay it down so clearly that officers will fully understand that, whatever their decision may be, there will be the right to appeal from that decision.

Senator ROWELL.—So there is.

Senator GARDINER.—And I hope, before this Bill is disposed of, that we will be quite sure that there will be no possibility of escape.

There are one or two provisions in the measure to which I desire to refer. Take the question of compulsory military training. There is a clause in this measure calling upon all male adults who have been resident in the Commonwealth for six months to submit themselves to compulsory military training for a considerable period. We can quite understand from what the Minister for Defence (Senator Pearce) said when moving the second reading of the Bill that, although there is no clause in the measure to provide for a seventy-days' training, all the arrangements have been made by which such a provision can be added after the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) has returned from the Imperial Conference.

Senator SENIOR.—By regulations "as prescribed," and so on.

Senator GARDINER.—Exactly. The Government have done so much by regulation that I am justified in anticipating that they will do almost anything. I am anxious to ascertain whether compulsory military training has been a success or not. I am not one of those who rages against compulsory training, but I endeavour to take an intelligent interest in what is being done. If we go back a few years, we realize that there are, at present, two Ministers who have occupied the position of Minister for Defence at present sitting at the Ministers' desk.

Senator PEARCE.—And one who is now addressing the Senate.

Senator GARDINER.—I can be regarded as an off sider.

I shall endeavour to crystallize in a few sentences what I think of our defence system. We had a system that aimed at reasonable efficiency by means of a skeleton army controlled by trained officers, who would be efficient in the event of war, and quite capable of training the necessary men to be added should the occasion arise. We have tried to supersede that, or we have superseded it, by a system of compulsory training, under which every one who is eligible is to be drilled and trained. But what we have to consider is whether the system we prate about is a success or not. I venture to say that the very officers and men who are called upon to carry out our present scheme of compulsory training find themselves so overloaded with the work of

recording who is on parade, and who is not, that there is not much time at their disposal to devote to the training of the young men of Australia. By endeavouring to train a large number we are failing to efficiently train even a small number.

Senator ROWELL.—There are men in training camps at present.

Senator GARDINER.—Yes; but what a handful! I look upon compulsory training as an experiment that has been in operation for some years, and before we extend the system by taking men from their usual occupations, we should inquire very closely into the results that have been achieved in an endeavour to ascertain whether, in the attempt to secure every eligible person in the community, we are omitting to efficiently train any. I believe we are. Apart altogether from the question of compulsory military training, I would like the Minister for Defence to arrange for his experts to inquire into the actual results. We know that there are cases in which proceedings have to be taken because a trainee has not put in the requisite number of drills. In a number of these cases there is a most complete system of recording the attendances of trainees which takes up most of the officers' time, and even after that has been done, the most extraordinary results have been brought about. I have watched very closely the endeavours of military men to spread the training over the whole of Australia. In my deliberate judgment, the result has not been as satisfactory as that which would have been achieved by the efficient training of a smaller number of men. In my opinion, it would be better to have an efficient skeleton army so that, in case of war, we would have an adequate number of officers and men well trained and capable of handling the others who would ultimately come in.

Senator COX.—The honorable senator would not be in favour of the necessary expenditure.

Senator GARDINER.—The expenditure would be less, and the results more satisfactory. I think it was in this chamber, or in another place, that an officer said that a man going into action at Gallipoli informed him that he had never had the opportunity of firing a rifle.

Senator COX.—I do not think that statement is correct.

Senator GARDINER.—I am merely repeating what I have heard.

Senator COX.—I think it is a deliberate lie.

Senator GARDINER.—I am trying to repeat something that is in my mind to demonstrate the inefficiency of our training system. I know that Senator COX will defend the military authorities.

Senator COX.—I am anxious to give justice where it is due. I know that the men who went to Gallipoli were trained to the last ounce.

Senator GARDINER.—I do not like to repeat statements that are inaccurate; but I believe that such a case was mentioned.

Senator COX.—I saw the men being trained. It may have been possible for one man not to have fired a rifle, but that would be an isolated case.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens).—Order!

Senator GARDINER.—I do not mind interruptions, because interjections at times are helpful. A statement similar to that I have made was uttered by an officer who was present at the time.

Senator SENIOR.—The honorable senator cannot base his argument on one case.

Senator GARDINER.—I know that, and I also know that the Minister for Defence is aware of the fact that when troops were leaving Australia the charge was levelled against the Government that the men were not adequately trained.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—The honorable senator is referring to reinforcements, and not to the original troops.

Senator GARDINER.—I realize that the case I have mentioned might be an isolated one; but it demonstrates the fact that the present system, which is considered to be so satisfactory, is altogether inefficient, because, in our endeavour to train a large number, we are not efficiently training even a small section of the eligible men in the Commonwealth.

Senator SENIOR.—The honorable senator is quite wrong.

Senator GARDINER.—I do not think so. If the recent war has not taught us something in the matter of organization, it will be unfortunate for Australia. A skeleton army of fully trained men is infinitely better than an army consisting of a large number inefficiently trained. I am certainly of the opinion that we are not making the most of our opportunities

for training men for the defence of this country.

I am not going to enter into the question of the efficiency or inefficiency of the members of the staff. I have no particular desire or reason to criticise or commend the general staff, because I make it my business, as a member of the Senate, to interfere as little as possible with the administration of any Commonwealth Department. I endeavour to stand aloof as far as is possible from all complaints that one could be associated with by allowing himself to become the agent of the people who wish their grievances to have the backing of a member of Parliament. My conduct has always shown a desire to keep from interfering with the administration, not only of the Defence, but of any other Department. But when we hear grave statements such as those which have been made by Senator Elliott, I think something should be done. Two years ago I advocated in this Senate the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into what happened at Gallipoli, and generally into the conduct of our Forces during their absence abroad. In connexion with the Gallipoli campaign, the British Government appointed a Court of inquiry, and this country, which suffered the most from it—

Senator PEARCE.—Was represented on the Commission.

Senator GARDINER.—The Commonwealth should have appointed a similar tribunal. Probably Australia was represented on the British inquiry; but now that our men have returned inquiries should be made, not only into the Gallipoli campaign, but into all the grave complaints that have reached us from time to time. The Minister for Defence shakes his head, because he thinks it would be too big a contract.

Senator SENIOR.—We would know when it began, but no one could say when it would end.

Senator GARDINER.—There are people moving about in this community who are suffering injustices, and their grievances are never likely to see the light of day. The Government, by taking the matter in hand, could clear up complaints such as have been made here by Senator Elliott, and a great many other serious complaints which affect both

the men and officers of the Australian Imperial Force. I think that Australia should demand an inquiry into the Gallipoli blunder. Of course, every man is at liberty to form his own opinion upon it. But one has merely to recollect the unpreparedness of our Expeditionary Force, as evidenced by the fact that during the first few days of the fighting it was unable to carry the wounded from the field of battle, to realize that there was a blunder committed. In view of the remarks of Senator Elliott to-day, the Ministry would be well advised if they appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the conduct of the war, so far as the Australian Forces were concerned, in Egypt, Gallipoli, and France.

Senator PEARCE.—Including all cases of supersession.

Senator GARDINER.—The superseding of a man may not mean very much to the Minister. Of course, I am not reflecting upon his sense of justice in any way.

Senator PEARCE.—The only point of which I was thinking was the number of cases that would be involved.

Senator GARDINER.—The Minister shrinks from the appointment of a Royal Commission because of the number of cases of supersession of officers. To my mind, that is another good reason why we should have an inquiry.

I intend to oppose the Bill, because it provides for compulsory training, and because I have convinced myself that compulsory training—

Senator DUNCAN.—Or did the Conference convince the honorable senator?

Senator GARDINER.—If Senator Duncan thinks that I think as my Conference thinks, I wish to tell him that when I attended that Conference I spoke most earnestly in favour of compulsory training. There is just this difference between Senator Duncan and myself, that the people whom I represent in the Labour movement trust me so well that they do not want me to think exactly as they think upon every question.

Senator DUNCAN.—They accept the honorable senator's pledge. That is enough.

Senator GARDINER.—There is no pledge in the Labour movement against compulsory training. I can quite understand a new senator being engaged in the task of adapting himself to the discipline and regulation of a party which is opposed

to the best interests of the party with which he has always been connected. I can quite understand that with him a change of conscience to suit his environment may be very easily effected. But so far as I am concerned, I intend to deal with the question of compulsory training from the stand-point of its efficiency. Does that system really make for the efficiency of our troops? Take, for example, the youths who are taken away from their football on Saturday afternoons.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—Looking on at football is the trouble.

Senator GARDINER.—I am speaking of those youths who play football. If 150 of the lads who would be playing football on Saturday afternoon are required to attend a military parade, I appeal to my military friends to say in which department they would be more profitably employed. To my mind, physical culture is of more importance than is military training. Why, then, should we take these youths away from such a strenuous game as football? When I visited the Military College some years ago, the late General Bridges was in charge of it, and he pointed with pride to the fact that 130 out of the 170 students there were playing football.

Senator PEARCE.—Take Sydney as an example. There there are forty men playing football upon a Saturday afternoon and 40,000 persons barracking.

Senator GARDINER.—The Minister may laugh at the barracker, but he is the fellow who has to pay for the sport. When speaking upon the Air Defence Bill I stressed the fact that too much attention is now being devoted to military drill. If I were the Minister for Defence I would frame a regulation providing that playing at a game of football should count as military drill. In New South Wales the youths who are engaged in compulsory training are also encouraged to take part in boxing contests. I witnessed quite a number of these contests between the men of two divisions in that State some time ago.

Senator ROWELL.—The noble art of self-defence.

Senator GARDINER.—Yes. The Defence Department is encouraging it, with a good deal of advantage to the Service. That being so, surely the youth who is actively engaged in physical training is fitting himself for war. I think that

some regulation might be framed under which attendance at a military parade would be excused if the trainee is engaged in playing football.

Senator BAKHAP.—We must have some drill. It was drill, as well as games, which made the Roman Legions what they were.

Senator GARDINER.—I think that the feats of the Roman Legions depended to a large extent upon the writers of that day. I would like to see the Roman Legions up against some of our "Ginger Micks."

Senator PAYNE.—That would not be fair.

Senator GARDINER.—The things which we most prize in history are those which have been most written about. Blessed is the military force which has an historian who is capable of writing something which will go down to posterity!

Senator WILSON.—It is not always wise to have one's record written.

Senator GARDINER.—I realize that some training for the defence of this country is essential. But there is another thing which is equally essential, especially in a Democracy like our own, namely, that we do not make that training repugnant to the people. If we provide for seventy days' training throughout the year, that provision will so harass the employment of the youths of this country, and will prove so annoying to the whole community, that it will become positively repugnant to them. Immediately we reach that state of affairs, all our attempts at compulsory training will go by the board. We should, therefore, endeavour to make our Defence Acts as palatable to the people as possible. Of course, while the Government have a majority in Parliament they may put just what provisions they please in our Defence Acts. But nevertheless they will be well advised if they frame all our measures relating to defence in such a form as will be acceptable to the Democracy. After all, it is upon the goodwill of the people themselves that we must depend for the successful working of our Statutes. Take such a case as that presented by Senator Elliott this afternoon. The Minister for Defence, I suppose, will be quite willing to defend the action of the military authorities, because it was in accordance with law and military custom.

That being so, I presume that there is nothing to be said about it. But in this Bill, the Minister intends to make it compulsory for students who have completed their term at the Military College to be bound to the Military Forces for a period of seven or eight years.

Senator PEARCE.—Yes.

Senator GARDINER.—I hope that we shall not permit such a provision to be retained in the Bill. Doubtless the Minister will say that these men have been trained at the cost of the Commonwealth, and will ask why they should be at liberty, upon finishing their term of training, to leave the Military Forces immediately. But let us view the matter from the stand-point of the man himself. He enters the college as a youth, passes through his training, and becomes an excellent officer. But he may possess a still greater capacity for service in some other avocation. Why should he be tied to a profession which has grown obnoxious to him?

Senator WILSON.—The honorable senator would give the military authorities power to call him up?

Senator GARDINER.—When once he has been trained, he is as good a man in one place as he would be in another. Should his services be required, he can always be called upon. But to keep any man in the Military Forces against his will, and particularly to keep young men there, would be disastrous, not only to the men themselves, but also to the Service. If they have any desire to leave the Service, it must be because adequate rewards are not given to them.

Senator WILSON.—Just now the honorable senator was advocating the establishment of a school in which other men might be educated. Where are the instructors to come from?

Senator PRATTEN.—I rise to a point of order. Inasmuch as either parts or the whole of the British Army Act is incorporated in this Bill, and no copy of that Act is before us, I submit that the Bill is improperly before the Senate.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens).—There is no need for me to argue the point which has been raised by Senator Pratten, because, as a matter of fact, no point of order is involved. The Bill is perfectly in order, and is properly

before the Senate, in that it has been read a first time, ordered to be printed, and honorable senators have been supplied with good copies of it.

Senator GARDINER.—I shall not, sir, comment on your decision; but I thought the point taken by Senator Pratten was fatal to the Bill, for the reason that I assume that our business should be conducted on common-sense lines, and we should not be called upon to incorporate the Army Act in the Bill before the Senate unless we have that Act before us.

I was referring to the provision under which young men who enter the Military College are to be bound to the Military Service after their college term has expired. What would honorable senators say if it were suggested that a young man, after he has served a number of years of apprenticeship to a particular calling, should be compelled to continue for a term of years to work for his master? I served my apprenticeship to a carpenter and, by analogy to the proposal of the Minister for Defence, my employer might have said after I had completed my apprenticeship, "I had you here for five years teaching you your trade when you could not do very much for me, and now you must work for me for another eight years in order that I may receive the benefit of your efficiency to meet what I lost by your inefficiency whilst you were being taught your trade." That is wrong reasoning to apply to any service. It must not be forgotten that young men, when they enter the Military College, are not of an age to decide whether they would prefer a military career. Under the Bill it is proposed to compel these young men, whether they like it or not, to remain in the Military Service for eight years after they have completed their college term.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I understood that the party to which the honorable senator belongs desired that youths of eighteen years should be given a vote. There will be youths of eighteen years in the Military College.

Senator GARDINER.—The point I wish to make is that we can easily keep in the Military Service young men trained in the Military College if we pay them sufficiently for the work they do. A youth entering the college will probably be unable to form any idea of the career of a military officer, yet we are to say that he shall serve five or six years in the college,

and at the end of that period, though he may be fitted to become an ornament to the highest profession in the land, he must remain attached to the Military Forces for another eight years. To my mind, that is an absolutely cruel provision.

Senator WILSON.—Was it not a Labour Government that passed the Act?

Senator PEARCE.—Yes, and they intended at the time to do what is now sought to be done by the Bill before the Senate.

Senator GARDINER.—I am fairly strong; but I confess that I am not able to bear responsibility for all the mistakes we made. I am, however, always prepared to face a position squarely, and do what I can to remedy what I have discovered to be a mistake. There can be no reason for compelling men to continue in an employment which may be distasteful to them. Honorable senators will know the many changes in life which they have themselves made. Young men starting in life may possess qualifications which would fit them to become great merchants.

Senator PEARCE.—Or successful politicians.

Senator GARDINER.—I have never referred very enthusiastically to successful politicians, because my experience has been that the lot of those who have been regarded as successful politicians has been rather a sad one. I do not know where to look for a successful politician. I can remember that one of the most distinguished politicians we had in New South Wales was obliged in his declining years to sell his library to maintain himself. A young man trained in the Military College may, when he reaches the age of twenty-one years, possess qualifications which would enable him to become a successful politician, but under this Bill the military will not permit him to do so, and insists upon control over him until he is twenty-nine years of age. I take the case of a young man who at about seventeen years of age enters the college, where he secures excellent training. I do not cavil at that, because I am aware that apart from military training very valuable civil instruction is given at the college.

It may happen that when he reaches the age of twenty-one years an opening may be afforded him to do real service for his family, but under the Bill it is proposed to tell such a young man

that he must remain in the Military Service for the pittance paid to him there, because his parents sent him to the Military College when he was too young to decide on a career for himself. I say that when a youth reaches twenty-one years of age he should receive the freedom of the country, and should not be compelled, whether he likes it or not, to continue in the Military Service.

Senator ROWELL.—Naval and military men have to enlist for a term of years.

Senator GARDINER.—I realize that with the Military College we might turn out a great number of well-trained military officers, so many in fact that if half of those necessary went down their places might be filled at once, and there is no reason why we should load up training at the college with conditions which must make it more difficult to secure young men who will become efficient officers.

Senator COX.—The honorable senator should know that when the war broke out the one thing we lacked was a sufficient number of efficient officers.

Senator GARDINER.—I believe that we shall never have sufficient of them when war breaks out, and we shall be less likely to have them if we handicap youths entering the college with the condition that after spending five years there in learning the military business they are to be bound to military service for the next eight years.

Senator WILSON.—It will have a tendency to make them mechanical.

Senator GARDINER.—The tendency will be to make parents more careful about sending their boys to the college. It will make the parents of boys who might make very efficient officers wonder whether it will be wise for them to determine not merely how their boys shall spend four or five years of their time, but their whole career. I ask honorable senators to bring reason to bear on their consideration of the proposed provision. There will be no need for compulsion to induce young Australians to fight if their country needs to be defended, and young men trained in the Military College will be all the more efficient if, after their college training, they, by engaging in civil occupations, obtain some knowledge of the world outside the Military Service. A young man who has gone through the college term, and passed all his examina-

tions with credit, may, at the close of the term, desire to go on to a station to assist his father, or, it may be, to take full control of its management. The Defence Department says, "No. You must remain in our service for the next eight years." I venture to say that the training he would get on the station would make that young man twice as efficient as he would be if he remained in the Military Service. In the same way, two or three years' training in a warehouse would increase his efficiency to a greater extent than two or three years devoted to drilling youths.

Senator ROWELL.—What did we establish the Military College for?

Senator GARDINER.—For the same reason that other colleges have been established.

Senator ROWELL.—No, for a very different purpose. It was to train young men as officers in order that they might be able to train our Citizen Forces.

Senator GARDINER.—I am sorry if I am not sufficiently familiar with the subject to make myself clear to the honorable senator, but the point I am making is that eight years' compulsory military service after an officer has received the training of the Military College will lessen rather than increase his efficiency. Should war come, the man who has two or three years' warehouse experience would be of far more service to the Commonwealth in preparing for the war than the man who spent the same time in drilling youths. To prepare effectively for war requires not only a knowledge of drill, but of all the activities that are covered by the whole business life of the community. I dare say there were fewer failures in connexion with Australia's preparation for war than in the preparation for war in most other countries, but I venture to say that half the failures in Australia were due to inefficiency on the part of those engaged in the service of supplies. We should let these young men take up civil occupations after their college term, so that, in the event of war, we may have the benefit of their business as well as their military knowledge. I suppose that we shall turn out 100 officers a year from the college.

Senator ROWELL.—No; only thirty are to enter now each year, so how can we turn out 100 each year?

Senator GARDINER.—I was judging by what I saw on a visit I made to the

Military College some years ago, when I think there were some 150 students there. Senator PEARCE.—There are four classes; they serve a four years' term, and thirty come out each year.

Senator GARDINER.—I believe that in the New South Wales Public Service young men entering certain offices bind themselves to serve for a certain time, but not for an extraordinary time. They are not obliged to continue in the Service until it becomes impossible for them to secure work outside.

Senator ROWELL.—Will not the Military College students have good opportunities for promotion?

Senator GARDINER.—That is very questionable. I venture to say that with the exception of the positions held by the "brass hats" the Military Service cannot be regarded as a very attractive Service for young men.

Senator ROWELL.—The student, after his term, will start with £5 per week, and he will be but a very young man.

Senator GARDINER.—How far will the remuneration go? Five pounds per week may be very attractive to a young man when he can earn no more, but some of these young men may possess talents which in other walks of life might enable them to earn handsome incomes or an early competence. Why should any of these young men be prevented by our Defence Act from making the best use of their intellects? These lads will start their military training as boys, and at the close of their college term, when they may be twenty-one years of age, it is proposed that they shall still remain slaves to the military system for another eight years.

Senator ROWELL.—Their military training will have cost the country hundreds of pounds, and why should they not render some service for it?

Senator GARDINER.—There would be force in the honorable senator's interjection if these young men were leaving Australia when their college course came to an end. They will be well-trained officers when their college term closes, and in my view they will be of far greater value to the Commonwealth if they are subsequently permitted to engage in civil occupations.

I appreciate very much the statement made by Senator Elliott, and I trust that the Minister will accept the reasonable amendments which the honorable

senator has suggested. If any man in the Military Service feels that he has been unjustly treated, he should be given the right of appeal to an authority that will not be influenced by the petty jealousies of officers. Such an amendment would materially improve the Bill. I know that the old military idea of discipline is that no one should complain against the authorities, and that there must be submission to them without question. Nothing is more out of date than a position of that kind. Here in the Senate we have authority which I am, beyond all others, always setting the example of obeying, but if that authority treats us unfairly we have the right of appeal to the whole of the members of the Senate. That does not detract from the dignity of the authority or from its power to enforce the rules of the Senate. Rather, it adds to and strengthens it, because my experience has been that, right or wrong, a decision of that authority is generally upheld. That is merely an illustration of the need for the right of appeal. There is no organized body which I am aware of that does not provide for an appeal. In the big railway systems of New South Wales and Victoria Appeal Boards became necessary, because the service would have broken down without them.

A big military scheme is put forward under this Bill. I venture to say, knowing the many hardships which have come under my personal notice, caused by decisions given by men who on some occasions, I am inclined to think, were perhaps actuated by a feeling of enmity towards the person they were hitting at—

Senator NEWLAND.—Does not the honorable senator think that some civilian connexion with the outside people would be an improvement on such a Board of Appeal?

Senator GARDINER.—If we could get the Minister, an officer, and some person selected by the two of them, I think they would make an excellent Board.

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—Would you recommend that sort of Board of Appeal to the Political Labour Council?

Senator GARDINER.—Our organizations are remarkable for their many appeals. They are always on the alert to prevent any one authority from usurping functions beyond those which properly belong to it. On the question of improving our military methods, and providing some

remedy where there is a flagrant wrong done, I ask the Minister to consider the aspect put forward by Senator Elliott, and to see whether he cannot draft some amendment which will be acceptable to Senator Elliott and to other honorable senators, because that will possibly be better done by the Minister in charge of the Bill than by a majority of the Senate, who may vote for an amendment which would not altogether meet with the Minister's approval.

I regret that the Bill contains so much of the military method. It is all compulsion from beginning to end. It all goes towards strengthening the power of the military authority. I had my mind turned to two or three clauses in it that seem to be altogether out of date in time of peace. I have no doubt the Bill will operate in time of war as well, and that the Minister is looking for a time of war when the Bill will operate, while in peaceful times we shall not hear much about it. We shall be able to deal with the various clauses in Committee. In the meantime, I hope to be able to make myself better acquainted with some of its provisions than I have done up to the present.

Senator FOSTER (Tasmania) [5.25].—I was interested in the point of order taken by Senator Pratten, that we ought to have before us a copy of the Army Act when we are dealing with this Bill. I endeavoured to obtain a copy from the Library, but I found that the copy kept there had gone. The members of this Chamber, particularly those who have had no military experience, and who know nothing of military methods, would do well to inform themselves of the big changes that will be effected by the substitution of the Army Act for our present Defence Act. We have heard this afternoon from Senator Elliott, who has been a Brigadier-General, and who in the past has probably had the honour, or otherwise, of being called by the "diggers" a "brass hat," or "one of the heads," how a man in his position can be treated by others higher in the Military Service. If that is so, honorable senators can probably appreciate the view-point of a man like myself, who has served in the ranks, regarding some of the alterations that would be brought about in the Australian Citizen Army by the introduction of the Army Act, and its administration under

the provisions of this Bill as introduced by the Minister. When a Court of Appeal was suggested, the Minister rather smilingly asked whether every case of supersession and so on should be dealt with; but to the man who suffers an injustice, or sometimes, let us say, a supposed injustice, it is a matter of very great moment that he should have some Court of Appeal. There are men who know, and who have felt at times in their own persons, the injustices that are done in the Army, and if honorable senators had had similar experiences they would see to it that the youth of Australia are not brought under the iron heel of militarism. God knows, I hate militarism as much as I hate anything, and no man can hate it more. I wish to say very definitely, not in any bitter spirit, but because I believe it my duty to say it, that there is in Australia to-day a military clique, and that that clique are running the military machine of Australia as suits themselves, despite the fact that we have occupying the position of Minister for Defence a gentleman who, as he has said himself this afternoon, in effect represents the King. There is an old saying that the King can do no wrong. I know the Minister (Senator Pearce) would not go so far as that, nor do we think that the Military Board can do no wrong; but we do say that a great deal of the attempt that is being made at the present time to alter our scheme of defence in Australia, and to give greater authority to the military heads, is being caused at the instigation of those "red-tapped" gentlemen who are there for a living, and who are there to make the military machine to suit themselves.

Under the Army Act in Great Britain an officer is appointed who bears the title of Judge-Advocate-General. In most cases he has to review, as a sort of final Court of Appeal, the sentences of courts martial, and in some cases the appeals of those who have been subject to courts martial. I find no provision for that sort of thing in Australia. I believe there are legal gentlemen somewhere—during my service with the Australian Imperial Force I never knew where to find the man who filled such a position—or there is perhaps a legal man somewhere, if you can find him, who reviews the findings

and sentences imposed by courts martial. That is supposed to be done.

Senator COX.—It is not "supposed" to be done, it is done.

Senator FOSTER.—I will agree with the honorable senator that it is done. I go further, however, and say that if we give the power which this Bill proposes to military officers in Australia, whether constituting courts martial or not, we should at least give to the man who is tried the right to appeal on any point of law or fact to the Judge-Advocate-General.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—Everything goes to the Judge-Advocate-General as a matter of right and course, without recourse to appeal.

Senator FOSTER.—I have admitted that; but what I am suggesting is that, if a case goes to the Judge-Advocate-General for review the man himself should, if he so desires, have the right to put his case before that officer on a question either of law or of fact. Let me cite a case in point. I know a man abroad who was brought up on a trivial charge before his Officer Commanding, and, carrying one stripe, he elected to be dealt with by a court martial. When he came before the court martial, he found that there were two charges against him, instead of one. He took the point that the second charge could not be laid against him before a court martial, without his having been given a previous opportunity to plead to it before his Officer Commanding. The court martial told him he did not know what he was talking about, and proceeded to hear the two charges, and found him guilty of both. That man should have had the right to put his case before the Judge-Advocate-General. The same thing might occur in Australia. The duty of the Judge-Advocate-General is a very onerous one. I remember a case abroad, where a fellow in my own regiment went to sleep one night whilst standing on guard in a trench. The sergeant coming along, and seeing him asleep, took away the rifle that was standing by him, and went to call another sergeant as a witness. When he returned he found that the man had leant back, and got his own rifle, and was standing there on duty. The sergeant charged him with having been asleep on duty, and told him that he had actually taken away his

rifle while he was asleep. The man replied, "You are quite wrong. This is my rifle," and showed by the number that it was his own rifle. What had happened was that, when he went on duty he had taken the rifle of the man he had relieved. He had been asleep all right, and the case went before his Officer Commanding, and then before a court martial of our own officers. They sentenced him to ten years' imprisonment. He would have served that sentence, but for the fact that the case went before the Judge-Advocate-General, and to the General Officer Commanding. The General Officer Commanding said, "There is no case. This matter should not have gone beyond the orderly room," and annulled the whole proceeding. He came to that decision on a question of law as to the value of evidence, I take it. There are other cases where the accused should have had the opportunity of putting his side of the question before the Judge-Advocate-General or the Officer Commanding.

In the American Army, I understand that one member of a court martial in the case of non-commissioned officers, called I believe the waiting member, is a man of the same rank as the accused. I do not know whether I should be prepared to go to that extent, but I think that in every case, and this can be provided for by regulation, there should be on every court martial some man with legal knowledge. That should be provided for even in our Citizen Forces, where courts martial may be held. I am not saying that it has not been done in the past, but he should be there in every case to advise the other members of the court martial on matters of law.

Senator COX.—That was one of the things that we did in the latter part of the war. We deliberately trained officers for that purpose, for courts martial.

Senator FOSTER.—I know that, but the men who were trained in that way for courts martial were trained to fill the position of prosecutor.

Senator COX.—To sit on the Court.

Senator FOSTER.—They went to the Court as prosecutor.

Senator ROWELL.—No.

Senator FOSTER.—I beg the honorable senator's pardon. I know men, and can give the names of two of them, who went to the war and have returned, whose

job was to act as the prosecutor. Non-military senators should be told that the prosecutor at a court martial is not the prosecutor in the same sense of the word as the prosecutor in a Criminal Court.

He is also supposed to advise the court upon points of law, but is never a member of the court martial itself. I do not think that Senator Cox could say he had knowledge of any standing or permanent court martial abroad. These were always convened by the commanding officer as offences came up for consideration.

I think, also, that greater attention might be directed to the question of training our Citizen Force officers in the duties pertaining to a court martial, and inculcating in them something of the judicial mind, so that with their knowledge of military law they should be able to arrive at just decisions, and, in the words of the popular opera, "make the punishment fit the crime." I am afraid that on many occasions officers presiding over a court martial—I am not referring to cases that came before a Judge-Advocate-General—did not know very much about their duties. In this connexion I may relate a story which, perhaps, is a little far-fetched, but which will illustrate my point. It is the story of a young commanding officer presiding over a court, and not knowing much what to do, so, turned to the sergeant-major, who was advising him, and said, "Sergeant-major, what shall I do? Shall I fine him £1?" "No, sir," said the sergeant-major; "you cannot do that." "Well, shall I fine him 10s?" "No, sir; you cannot do that." "Well," said the commanding officer, "what shall I do?" "I think, sir," replied the sergeant-major, "that I would admonish him." "Very good," said the commanding officer; and, turning to the man on trial, he said, "You are admonished; and, Sergeant-Major, you see that he does it!" This story, though probably an exaggeration, reflects the experiences of the men, not at the top in military affairs, but at the bottom.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—We have all been there from the bottom upwards.

Senator FOSTER.—Well, not recently, at all events. I can speak from experience, and I hope I shall not be accused of bitterness when I say that it would be as well to have our officers trained in a knowledge of military law and in the cultivation of a judicial mind.

Senator PEARCE.—I have been informed by a man who served in our Forces that, taking the Australian Imperial Force courts martial by and large, they would compare more than favorably with the administration of justice in the Australian Courts.

Senator FOSTER.—I would agree with that statement. Indeed, I go further, and say that 999 men out of 1,000 who served abroad believed that they received better treatment from Australian officers in Australian courts martial than was meted out by English officers to their men. I think I have previously mentioned the case of a man who approached me in Tasmania with a complaint about some deductions that had been made in his pay. He said that when he was in prison in England he was sent for one day, and had to appear in the governor's office, where he found the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) going through the pile of papers dealing with his case. He told me that Mr. Hughes said, "I see that you have got two years for being absent without leave for a few days. What do you think of it? Pretty hot, isn't it?" "Yes, sir," replied the man. "Why did you not make a fuss about it?" asked the Prime Minister. "Because I did not think it would be any good," he replied. "All right," said the Prime Minister, "you will be out of this in forty-eight hours." I am merely quoting this incident to illustrate what the Prime Minister thought of the sentence.

Senator PRATTEN.—Was that sentence imposed by an Australian court martial?

Senator FOSTER.—Yes. The man got two years.

Senator PRATTEN.—That hardly bears out what you said just now about Australian courts martial.

Senator FOSTER.—I think I said that 999 out of every 1000 soldiers were satisfied that they got better treatment from Australian officers than British officers dealt out to British soldiers. It is probable that for a similar offence, a British court martial would have imposed a sentence of ten years.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—The offence "absent without leave" means a lot or nothing. Everything depends upon whether the regiment was in the line or in the back areas.

Senator FOSTER.—I am not passing any judgment on the sentence. I am

merely relating to the Senate the opinion of the Prime Minister after his perusal of the papers. This man who had served six months was released within 48 hours of the Prime Minister's intervention, and was sent back to his unit, but on his return to Australia he found that he had been debited with two years' deduction of his pay, because, as I have shown, he had been sentenced to two years' imprisonment. When he spoke to me on the subject, he said, "I went back into the line and got 'cracked' and gassed, and now I find they have deducted two years' pay. It is a bit rough to be hit up like this. Do you think it is a fair deal"? I replied that, of course, I did not think it was a fair deal. And the Minister for Defence (Senator Pearce) expressed the same view when the papers came before him.

I am not cavilling at the treatment meted out to our men on active service, because it was war time and mistakes inevitably occurred, hardships were borne, and lives were laid down at times. But I do say that we should see to it that the militarism, which, during the war, we were taught to hate, is not introduced into the training of the Citizen Forces of this country. I understand that under this Bill an officer may order a man to be imprisoned for three months for offences against the military law. I do not want the youth of Australia to run that risk; and without any disrespect to the Minister I warn the Senate against adopting holus bolus the provisions of the British Army Act, and against accepting something which has been foisted upon this community by the military clique which we have in Australia.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [5.45].—During the debate we have had very interesting speeches from two honorable senators, who have had actual military experience in the field. This is a Bill of twenty-five pages and seventy-one clauses, so I can quite understand that in it there is something more than the mere machinery of the Defence Act, as was suggested by the Minister (Senator Pearce) earlier in the session. It would be extremely advantageous if the eight or nine honorable senators who served this country at the Front during the late war, gave us the benefit of their experiences in relation to this measure, and I trust those gallant gentlemen will do so. I agree with

Senator Elliott and Senator Foster that we should hesitate before agreeing to the continued imposition upon the people of Australia of that militarism which was typified in the war, and what went on during the war.

My honorable friend, Senator Elliott, has opened up an extremely grave position. He has had the courage to state some of his own experiences, and has risked a retort from those concerned that he has done so from personal motives, though I do not think his standing in Victoria will enable a retort of this nature to be made effectively. He has put up a case that calls for further inquiry. As I understand him, he stated most deliberately and emphatically, that because of certain actions he related in connexion with his own command at the Front, he was threatened or told by General Birdwood that what he had done was a bar against his future military career. I have never been an admirer of General Birdwood. I say quite frankly and openly now, and I think I have said it before, that I regard General Birdwood to some extent as a "lime lighter." I have reasons for saying this, but do not desire to recapitulate them now. We have been told this afternoon by a man who was there, that General Birdwood's Chief of Staff, General Sir Brudenell White, left the Australian command when it was taken over by Sir John Monash.

Senator PEARCE.—That is not correct. You know General Birdwood retained the general command till the end of the war.

Senator PRATTEN.—We have been told by General Elliott that when the command of the Australian Division was taken over by Sir John Monash, General Sir Brudenell White left that section of the line, at all events.

Senator PEARCE.—But you know that General Birdwood was Commander of the Australian Imperial Force until the end of the war.

Senator PRATTEN.—I know he was Commander of the Fifth or Sixth British Army in connexion with operations in France and Belgium. I am endeavouring to put the events in their chronological order.

Senator PEARCE.—But why should the honorable senator endeavour to mislead himself?

Senator PRATTEN.—I think I am clear in the statement I am making.

Senator PEARCE.—Why accept a statement which you know to be incorrect? The honorable senator is assuming that General Birdwood severed his connexion with the Australian Imperial Force.

Senator GARDINER.—So he did for all practical purposes. He took another command.

Senator PRATTEN.—I was not there because I was over age. If I understood the honorable senator aright, he said that General Sir Brudenell White left the Australian Head-quarters with General Sir William Birdwood when General Sir John Monash took over the supreme command of the Australian Imperial Force.

Senator PEARCE.—General Monash took over an Army Corps, and General Birdwood still remained in command of the Australian Imperial Force.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Not in the field.

Senator PRATTEN.—When experts differ perhaps honest men will get their rights. I do not know the facts; but I am endeavouring to follow the honorable senator up to this point. The suggestion he left in my mind was that General Sir Brudenell White was not an Australian, but an officer of the British Army, whose inclinations and sentiments were with the British, and not with the Australian Army under General Monash.

We now come to the point made by Senator Elliott that General Sir Brudenell White is now in the Defence Department, and has associated with him General Sellheim, General Forsyth, and Colonel Thomas, who constitute the Australian Military Board. I am not clear as to whether an appeal can be made from that Board to the Minister, and perhaps the Minister for Defence (Senator Pearce) will assist me.

Senator PEARCE.—The Minister presides over the Board, and can veto any action of the Board.

Senator PRATTEN.—Supposing the Minister as presiding officer should be absent, can an appeal be made direct to the Minister?

Senator PEARCE.—Even if the Minister is absent, the Board cannot function without the approval of the Minister, or some other Minister acting on his behalf.

Senator PRATTEN.—We have reached the point that, by implication, General Sir Brudenell White is more British in sentiment than Australian.

Senator PEARCE.—Does the honorable senator say that?

Senator PRATTEN.—That is the implication, and it has been so stated by Senator Elliott.

Senator PEARCE.—Is the honorable senator prepared to say that General Sir Brudenell White is more British in sentiment than Australian?

Senator PRATTEN.—I am not saying that, but endeavouring to understand the position as set out by some honorable senators. I am sorry that Senator Glasgow is not present, and I am hoping that Senator Drake-Brockman and Senator Duncan will tell us more about this very interesting position. I am endeavouring, so far as a layman can, to follow the remarks that have been made, and with my non-military mind to come to a fair conclusion as to what is the actual position. In reverting to General Sir Brudenell White, who, by inclination and service, we have been told, is more British than Australian, we come to General Sellheim, who wears a soldiers' badge, and who, it has been said, was at the front for only two days. I have been informed that this officer spent the principal part of his time in the Paymaster's office in London. Then we come to Colonel Thomas.

Senator PEARCE.—General Sellheim was at the administrative Head-quarters in Egypt.

Senator PRATTEN.—I am willing to accept the correction; but it makes no difference whether he was in London or in Egypt, because that is immaterial to my argument. At any rate, he was performing civilian service, and Colonel Thomas, I understand, was in a similar position.

Senator PEARCE.—He is not a soldier at all. He was head of the Pay Branch.

Senator PRATTEN.—Then I shall describe him as a "civilian soldier." Then we have General Forsyth, whose experience on active service covers the whole of the Gallipoli campaign. The Board consists of these four men, and is presided over by the Minister for Defence, who we know was a non-combatant.

Senator PEARCE.—Very much so.

Senator PRATTEN.—These gentlemen are controlling the military situation in Australia, and are, in effect, responsible for the expenditure of a large sum of money.

Coming to the Bill, which is to be administered by these men, I may say that my major objection to its provisions

is the incorporation of the British Army Act in our military regulations, both in peace time and in war, in so far as they do not conflict with our defence legislation. I have never seen the British Army Act, and, temperamentally, I am not likely to record an affirmative vote in favour of something I have never seen. In my capacity as a responsible legislator, I am not likely to record a vote in favour of something I do not understand. In my early days, I can recall seeing a number of red coats, and I am going to assume for the purpose of my argument that the British Army Act has been built up possibly from the days of the periwig, pipeclay belts, and the rope's end, and has been added to as the result of the experience gained during the recent war. I feel that I am on safe ground in assuming that an Army Act was in force before the last war commenced, and that that Act has been amended and added to, and is now the British Army Act. I do not know anything of the British Army Act or of the powers it gives. Neither do I know anything of the decisions come to by the council of five, comprising the Minister for Defence and the four persons I have mentioned. I consider that the point of order I raised in connexion with this Bill was justified, because the question needs some consideration, inasmuch as if we passed clause 18 we would be grafting the British Army Act on to this Bill. I think I am safe in saying that the majority of the members of this Senate do not know what they are doing. Senator Foster said that he endeavoured to secure a copy of the British Army Act from the Library without success, and in these circumstances I am not inclined to give an affirmative vote, at any rate on clause 18, until I have further information.

With my honorable friend I am an intense anti-militarist, and I am not enamoured of those gentlemen, past and present, who have so largely controlled the operations of the Defence Department. I am not enamoured of giving power to any one to impose savage sentences for minor offences in times of peace. I am not inclined to give power to military authorities, with little experience and no sympathy, to harshly discipline men who, by virtue of being in the Citizen Forces, show that they possess the civic spirit.

Senator FAIRBAIRN.—Can the honorable senator give an instance of a savage sentence being imposed?

Senator PRATTEN.—My argument refers to the possibility of it occurring if the British Army Act is grafted on to the military system of Australia as designed in this Bill. I am not at all enamoured of our military policy. The last conflict was not a war of human units, but one of machines. It was a war of chemists, and as a result of the forthcoming Imperial Conference in London, I trust that the whole of our Naval and Defence policies will go into the melting pot, and earnest consideration be given, not to red-tape, red tabs, military discipline, forming fours, or doing the goose-step, but to the manufacture in Australia of machinery and the necessary appliances which would help us in times of emergency. We should establish laboratories so that chemists would be able to work on the manufacture of munitions.

Senator PEARCE.—All that has been done, and is being continued.

Senator PRATTEN.—Where, and how?

Senator PEARCE.—By the red tabs.

Senator PRATTEN.—By General Sellheim?

Senator Cox.—We must have the men to man the guns.

Senator PRATTEN.—I have already said that the recent war was one of chemists and mechanics, and the next war will probably be not only one of machinery and chemicals, but of nations, and the Australian nation will have to mobilize and organize for defence. No defence scheme will be effective unless we mobilize the whole of our resources, particularly if it is a war of defence.

It was pointed out by Senator Elliott that the provisions in the Bill regarding badges are more military than is reasonable, and any amendment he may move in the direction he indicated will have my support.

Something has been said about compulsory training. I am not at all clear that the present system is producing the best results. In view of what occurred during the recent war, I am not sure that it is not a system which is as dead as Julius Caesar. Whilst I do not wish to attack the principle of universal compulsory military training, I am inclined to think

that the system is getting more and more into narrow official circles, and that the reason which underlies it is being lost sight of in heaps of red-tape.

Senator PEARCE.—There was never a time when the citizens of this country were taking a greater part in compulsory training.

Senator PRATTEN.—So far as my own State is concerned, there are many bitter complaints against the action of the military authorities in "drag-netting" every youth into a camp, irrespective of his domestic or other circumstances.

Senator PEARCE.—That is an argument against compulsory training.

Senator PRATTEN.—Quite so. I am merely voicing some of the complaints which are being made in my own State in regard to the administration of the present law.

I have no wish to delay the Senate unnecessarily, but I feel that a Bill which covers twenty-five pages of print, which contains seventy-one clauses, accompanied, as it is, by another explanatory measure consisting of forty-four pages of printed matter, together with the British Army Act, which contains almost as many words as does the Bible, ought not to be dealt with hurriedly. In addition, we have to consider the regulations in connexion with the whole of our defence scheme. In these circumstances I hope that honorable senators, and especially those who possess military experience, will not allow this occasion to pass without offering some comments upon the whole position—past, present, and future. I trust that they will give us some more interesting personal reminiscences, such as were narrated this afternoon by Senator Elliott and Senator Foster. In view of the voluminous matter which has to be carefully considered in connexion with this Bill, and seeing that military policies are in a state of flux by reason of the world's position, of the establishment of the League of Nations, and of the attitude of America towards that body, the consideration of the measure might very well be postponed till a more fitting period towards the close of the present year. A revolution is necessary in military methods in Australia as the result of the

lessons which were learned during the recent war.

Senator WILSON.—We are very fortunate in that the Senate possesses a body of military men who can render us valuable assistance in the consideration of this measure.

Senator PRATTEN.—We are.

Senator COX (New South Wales) [6.10].—I have listened very patiently to a lot of harrowing details concerning the way in which courts martial were conducted during the recent war. The Australian Imperial Force had a good deal of experience of these tribunals, and, as time passed, and we found that all our senior officers and officers with experience were being shot out, young men had to be appointed in their places who were probably not familiar with the procedure adopted by courts martial. Arrangements were therefore made whereby every officer who was granted a commission was to be trained in that procedure. I say, without fear of contradiction, that every member of the mounted portion of the Australian Imperial Force who was tried by court martial received a fair deal. We were most particular about having officers thoroughly instructed in the ways of courts martial. Upon top of that we had the Judge Advocate-General, who reviewed the proceedings of all these courts martial, and who, whenever he found anything in favour of the prisoner, always gave him the benefit of it. It is wrong for any honorable senator to throw dirty water upon these officers. I recognise that we had to make officers on the field because we had not sufficient trained men in Australia, and because it was impossible for any nation to foresee the number of officers that would be required during the war. Thus it came about that men who were troopers or non-commissioned officers to-day were lieutenants to-morrow. Upon Gallipoli our losses were so great that we could not send these men away in order that they might secure the necessary training, but they were men who had landed on the Peninsula, and who had been thoroughly trained in Egypt before they went there. The first Force which landed on Gallipoli was as thoroughly trained as it was possible for them to be, and so also were the officers who accompanied them. They

were a fine fighting machine. The casualties suffered were tremendous, and we had not sufficient trained men in reserve to fill the gaps thus created. But the men who took the places of the fallen had been trained as troopers and non-commissioned officers. As soon as the opportunity occurred, these men were sent to schools of instruction in order that they might be fitted for the commissions which they held, and which included the conduct of courts martial. It is part of an officer's duty to understand that. It is absolutely wrong to decry our own officers. It is admitted that our men were well cared for, and that they received fair and honest treatment. We must remember that all the men who went away from here were not angels. Let me give the other side of the picture. I remember having a man under my command who deliberately told an officer on board ship that he would not go on shore at Gallipoli. He was taken ashore, and he then said that he would not go into the front line.

Senator FAIRBAIRN.—Did you shoot him?

Senator COX.—The honorable senator ought to know what is the law of this country. An Australian cannot be shot for refusing to enter the front line. If a man were shot for such an offence there would be a big row about it. This particular fellow was tried by court martial. His regiment happened to be in the front line, and he had to go pretty close to that line in order to have the court martial constituted. The divisional commander afterwards told me that he had received a pretty severe sentence, and that I ought to give him a chance. I replied, "I will not have him. Do what you like with him." The man was then given certain work to do at Anzac Cove. Evidently he had made up his mind that he would not fight and that he would not work. While he was down in the front line and was being nursed by this divisional general, one of the latter's staff officers while walking past this man was set upon by him and received a terrible doing. The offender was further court martialled, and as a result was sent off Gallipoli. Yet that man had the temerity to come along the other day

and ask me to assist him in obtaining his gratuity.

Senator FAIRBAIRN.—Did you do it?

Senator COX.—I do not think that I did. We must be just to both sides. Our men, I contend, received a fair and honest deal. During the latter part of the war practically all the officers had risen from the ranks and had been given the best possible training.

Senator DUNCAN.—They were a very good lot.

Senator COX.—Their record will bear fair comparison with that of any officers in the world.

Senator DUNCAN.—Did the honorable senator have any practical experience of the working of the British Army Act, so far as its application to Australia is concerned?

Senator COX.—We were always working under the British Army Act, except in two or three particulars, one of which was that we could not order a man to be shot. That prohibition was imposed at the express wish of the Commonwealth Government.

Senator PEARCE.—Our Defence Act prohibits that.

Senator COX.—We worked practically under the British Army Act.

Senator DUNCAN.—Did the honorable senator find that its application to the Australian Forces involved any hardship to them as compared with the Tommies?

Senator COX.—No. It provides for every possible contingency. When we place officers in the field we must give them absolute control of the Forces under them. If a commander-in-chief has a man under him who will not do exactly what he has been told to do, the former will be left in the lurch. It does not matter how fine the intentions of the commander-in-chief may be if his subordinates will not co-operate with him. Consequently I would vest the commander-in-chief with plenary powers. Immediately he was appointed, every man who did not implicitly obey him should be told that he ought to get back to Australia in order that another man might be put in his place.

Senator ELLIOTT.—How far would the honorable senator go?

Senator COX.—To the limit. I would say to my subordinate, "You do what I tell you or I will out you."

Senator ELLIOTT.—Commit murder, for instance?

Senator COX.—I would say that if he disobeyed my orders he should get off the field or I would do so.

Senator PRATTEN.—What we are objecting to is the application of the Army Act in time of peace.

Senator COX.—We must have the Army Act. How otherwise can we administer the Army? If I am commander-in-chief of the Army, and the honorable senator is to be my boss and tell me what I am to do, I might as well leave my position.

Senator REID.—In administering the Army Act, did Australian officers find any difficulty in being humane and generous to those charged with offences?

Senator COX.—No, they did not.

Senator REID.—Did they make any bad use of the Army Act, from the honorable senator's experience?

Senator COX.—Absolutely no.

Senator DUNCAN.—Does the honorable senator say that the whole of the officers of the Australian Imperial Force had a practical working knowledge of the Army Act?

Senator COX.—I do not say that the whole of them had such a knowledge. I have tried to explain that. I say that we did our level best to give them a practical knowledge of occurs martial.

Senator DUNCAN.—The Army Act covers a great deal more than that.

Senator COX.—I am aware of that; but a young subaltern, a major, or a colonel constituting an ordinary court martial for the trial of offences of drunkenness and absence without leave do not require all that knowledge. It must be remembered also that there are senior staff officers who may be called upon to give advice. Then in serious cases inexperienced men are not put on courts martial. There are senior officers to advise as to the persons to constitute a court martial. Sergeant Jones, or any Tom, Dick, or Harry cannot form a court martial. The members of a court martial are nominated by senior officers. I say that the British Army Act is absolutely necessary.

Senator FAIRBAIRN.—Our officers must understand it in peace time as well as in war time.

Senator COX.—That is so.

Senator PRATTEN.—Is it necessary to apply it to our Forces in peace time?

Senator COX.—The Minister for Defence can explain its application in peace time. Honorable senators are aware that quite a number of young fellows passively resist the present form of compulsory training, and their parents deliberately encourage them in doing so. If we have not the power to make these boys undergo training, what are we to do?

Senator PRATTEN.—The objection of the parents may be a conscientious objection.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens).—Order! There are too many interjections.

Senator COX.—That is all I have to say. I should like to put it on record that I really believe that our men got fair and honest treatment by all the courts martial.

Senator DUNCAN.—Does the honorable senator think that Australian soldiers will submit to the same kind and degree of discipline as will the ordinary British soldier?

Senator COX.—Absolutely. Put Australian men under Australian officers and they will submit to discipline. I say that without fear of contradiction.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Before the honorable senator resumes his seat, I should like to ask him one question,

The PRESIDENT.—Order! This is not a cross-examination.

Sitting suspended from 6.27 to 8 p.m.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN (Western Australia) [8.0].—My friend, Senator Pratten, has, I think, deliberately set out to try to draw on this Bill those members of the Senate who have served in His Majesty's Forces. So far as I am concerned he has succeeded in drawing me. I do not propose to deal with all the subjects that have been brought up this afternoon at any great length, because this must be regarded as in a great measure a Committee Bill, and there are many provisions in it that need very careful consideration before we adopt them. The first thing that needs most careful consideration by the Senate is the proposal to adopt the whole of the British Army Act and incorporate it in this measure. Particularly is that a large pill to ask the Senate to swallow when honorable senators have not had an opportunity of examining that Act. Consequently, it is an advantage that those members of the Senate who have worked under the Act should express their opinions regarding it.

I am sure Senator Pratten will be glad to know my opinion of it. I have no hesitation in saying that the British Army Act is one of the most perfect specimens of draftsmanship in existence on any statute-book in the world. It is not a thing that has been thought out in five minutes. It has been growing and developing with the British Army. In it is incorporated the experience of 300 or 400 years of soldiering in peace time and soldiering in war time. We who were in the Australian Imperial Force had an opportunity of appreciating the merits of that measure, and so far as I know the members of the Australian Imperial Force have not suffered by reason of the fact that they were administered under it. Ex-soldiers here this afternoon have said clearly and distinctly that the form of trial used on active service for soldiers is the fairest form of trial that exists under any system in the world. With that I entirely agree.

Senator PRATTEN.—Would you qualify that by saying "military form of trial"?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I shall do nothing of the sort. I shall stick to my guns and say it is the fairest form of trial I have ever been associated with or have ever read of. I need not remind honorable senators that I have had some little experience in the Courts of Law in at least two States of Australia, and, moreover, I have appeared in several capacities in connexion with many courts martial on active service. I have presided over many courts martial on active service, I have been a member of many courts over which I have not presided on active service, and I have no hesitation in giving my opinion in very definite terms. I agree with the Minister for Defence (Senator Pearce) that it is very desirable that the Act which governs the Military Forces of Australia should be the same in peace as in war. Did this Parliament hesitate to send the men of Australia on active service to be governed by the Army Act? Not in the least. I would remind the Senate that—and in some respects it was a rather fortunate thing—that Act was being administered by Australian officers 10,000 miles away from this Parliament and from public criticism in Australia. Can honorable senators point to any occasion when those Australian officers abused the confidence that this Parliament placed in them? Mistakes may have been made, but they

were very rare. If, then, Parliament was prepared to trust the men of Australia 10,000 miles away from home, and from the criticism that counted, and from this Parliament, how much more ought it to be prepared to trust Australian officers to administer this Act here, where there is a very free press, which certainly does not hesitate to criticise anybody and everybody, and a Parliament that is most vigilant to see that no abuse is perpetrated under this or any other Act?

Senator GARDINER.—Do you not think that we, who do not know the Act, should have it before us?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I have said that the Ministry are asking this Parliament to swallow a very big pill in expecting it to accept the Army Act, which members have not had an opportunity of seeing or reading. It is because they have not had an opportunity of seeing or reading it, and because I have had an opportunity of working under it, that I thought that the members of the Senate would like to have my opinion on it. I have given that opinion as straight as I know how to give it. If honorable senators were prepared to trust Australian officers to administer that Act when there was practically no possibility of criticism, why do they hesitate to allow Australian officers in peace time to administer the same Act, when they have every opportunity of watching most carefully everything that those officers do?

Senator EARLE.—Does the honorable senator say that the Act is as applicable to the Citizen Forces of Australia as it is to the Permanent Forces of England?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I do. I say that that Act, administered by conscientious and capable officers, is such a perfect document, and of such perfect draftsmanship, that it is just as applicable to the Citizen Forces of Australia in time of peace as it is to the Forces of Australia, or of the Empire, in time of war.

Senator PRATTEN.—Do you not think the lay members of the Senate ought to have an opportunity of judging, too?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I agree with the honorable senator.

Senator ROWELL.—It was embodied in the South Australian Act and was operative until Federation.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—It was, and I believe it was embodied in the West Australian Act. I am not sure about the other States, but I fancy that

most of the Forces in Australia, at one time or other, have been administered under that Act. Those who are familiar with the Australian Defence Act and regulations, and have tried to work under it, can bear me out that it is a most indifferent instrument to work under, as compared with the British Act. It is a thing that was produced a few years ago, and it has disclosed many weaknesses. If I had the choice as to which I would administer or under which I would be administered, I should have no hesitation in accepting the British Act.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Why not bring it in in the Bill?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—That is not my business. Perhaps it would have been a great deal better if the Ministry had seen fit to bring down the whole of that Act as a new measure for us to consider in detail. However, that has not been done, and because it has not been done I desire to give the Senate the benefit of what little experience and knowledge I have of it, so that the pill which the members of the Senate are asked to swallow may have a little coating of sugar on it before they try to digest it.

There is one matter which my gallant and distinguished friend, Senator Elliott, has referred to, and in referring to which he has displayed the same courage that he was so celebrated for in the field. He has not hesitated to bring up a matter which concerns himself very closely, in order to illustrate what he considers a great defect in our present system. He has pointed out that when an officer of his seniority has to appeal to the Military Board, it is a case of appealing from Caesar to Caesar; because, when you boil it down, the only man who can give a ruling or an order that can affect a man of the gallant and distinguished senator's seniority in the Military Forces, is a member of that Board. When he is dissatisfied with any ruling that may be given against him, he is virtually compelled to appeal to the same man as has already decided it. I do not propose to go into the merits or otherwise of the honorable senator's complaint, but it is a matter that ought to be considered by the Government, so that, when a senior officer feels that he has a grievance, there may be some Court to which he can appeal for finality and satisfaction. I am most careful not to go into the merits of the matter

that my gallant and distinguished friend referred to this afternoon. I know nothing more about it than he has told us here, and we have heard one side, but, with the courage for which he is so famous, he has not hesitated to illustrate here, with his own personal experience and grievance, what he considers to be a grave defect in our present system. I am very much inclined to agree with the honorable senator that there should be a further appeal to the Governor-General and the Executive Council from the decisions of the Military Board.

Senator PEARCE.—Would you confine that appeal to senior officers?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I was about to point out that the Military Board may be a very useful final Court of appeal from decisions affecting lower formations. That is to say, where a commanding officer has given a decision that affects any one junior to him—and by "commanding officer" I mean, broadly speaking, anybody who is in command of a unit, that is, from a colonel downwards—an appeal from him to the Military Board, or to the divisional commander first, and finally to the Military Board, may be effective. There a man is not appealing from Caesar to Caesar, but, in the case of a senior officer, I think I describe the appeal correctly in calling it an appeal from Caesar to Caesar. However, there is no reason why the matter should not be carried further, just as it is under the British system, where there is a final appeal in every case right up to His Majesty. Why should it not be the same here? That system is the result of hundreds of years of experience. It must be remembered that that perfect piece of legislation to which I have already referred was designed not merely to effect discipline but also to protect the people who were disciplined. While I advocate the introduction of this Bill, I also think it would be advisable to accept the suggestion made by my gallant and distinguished friend, General Elliott, that we should adopt the British system of appeal to His Majesty's representative in Australia. I do not suggest, as Senator Pearce thought I did, that this right of appeal should be confined only to senior officers, but, if it were, and the present Board were the final Court of Appeal for everybody else, we would probably have a very good working system.

I come now to the comments made by Senator Pratten, whose remarks, in a great measure, were instrumental in inducing me to address the Senate. In the course of his speech he criticised two very distinguished officers who have been associated with the Australian Imperial Force. His first criticism was levelled against General Birdwood, whom he characterized as a "limelighter." If General Birdwood were merely a "limelighter," why was he received so enthusiastically by the "diggers" of Australia on the occasion of his recent visit? I am not here to defend General Birdwood. I think that his reception by our soldiers was a greater defence than any words of mine could possibly be. He is not only a very able and distinguished General, but I have no hesitation in saying he created for himself an affection from the men who served under him that is seldom inspired by one man towards another.

Senator PRATTEN.—There are two opinions about that.

Senator DRAKE - BROCKMAN.—There may be two opinions as the honorable senator suggests. The opinion I have expressed is held by 99.9 per cent. of the men who served under him. The other opinion may be held by .1 per cent. of the men referred to. I have had an opportunity of judging, because I have served with these men under General Birdwood. I have been amongst men of all ranks and all classes, and this is the conclusion I have come to, and is the reason why I protest so strongly against the attack made upon him by Senator Pratten. The other officer attacked was Sir Brudenell White, who, according to Senator Pratten, was an importation. I believe I am correct in saying that General White was born in Queensland, and was educated there.

Senator ELLIOTT.—No. He was born in Victoria.

Senator DRAKE - BROCKMAN.—Well, at all events, he was born in Australia and educated here. He started life, I understand, as a clerk in a Queensland bank. From there, he went into the Military Forces, and it was not long before he made himself fairly prominent. Then he was elected to go to England for instruction at a staff college, through which he passed.

Senator PEARCE.—The first Australian officer to do so.

Senator DRAKE - BROCKMAN.—That is so. He was the first Australian officer to pass through the college, and, moreover, he passed at the head of his year. Then after a short service in England, he returned to Australia and went on active service with the Australian Imperial Force, so that this very distinguished officer, who has been described by Senator Pratten as an importation, with leanings towards troops from other parts of the Empire rather than to those of Australia, has, with the exception of portion of his educational period, served exclusively with the Australian troops. Moreover, he was the chief staff officer of the first Australian Division on Gallipoli, and it was under his direction, subject to the supervision of General Bridges, that the efficient training of the first Australian troops in Egypt was carried out, and to which, in no small measure, they owed their wonderful success in the field and at the landing on Gallipoli. The work which this officer performed has evoked praise from every military scientist and critic of any note within the British Empire. The evacuation of Gallipoli was principally his work. I have no hesitation in saying that, next to General Monash, General Sir Brudenell White is the most distinguished and capable officer that Australia has produced.

Senator PRATTEN.—Then you do place Sir General Monash first?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I have stated that, next to General Monash General White is the most distinguished and capable officer that Australia has produced, and I do not hesitate to add that he is the most distinguished and capable permanent officer in Australia at the present time. But that he should be Cæsar, and that there should be an appeal only from Cæsar to Cæsar, I do not advocate, despite my admiration of his ability and integrity.

There has been criticism of other officers of the Australian staff. Perhaps, before the war, we were not in a position to assess the value of members of the permanent staff, but those of us who had the honour to serve with the Australian Imperial Force are only too well aware that, in the permanent Forces, there are many men who should be pensioned off and got rid of. The war disclosed their strength and their weaknesses. I do not see any provision in the Bill giving to

the Minister power to dispense with these inefficient officers, and I do not suppose we shall ever get rid of them until we establish some system of pensions, which I should like to see incorporated in this measure, so that we would not have this unfortunate weight of inefficients attached to the military machine.

Senator ROWELL.—We want a superannuation scheme.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—Probably that would meet the difficulty. The Minister knows this as well as I do, but he is powerless to get rid of the inefficient officers. I used to think that I would like to be Minister for Defence for just about three months, so as to be able to clean up some sections of the Defence Department, but I have since learned that the Minister is almost powerless. Knowing as I do that the Department is saddled with so many inefficients, my only surprise is that he has not asked for authority to dispose of them.

Senator GARDINER.—What would happen if they were placed on the half-pay list?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—At the end of twelve months they would automatically go out. But could we do this? Those officers, when they entered upon a military career as young men were, no doubt, thought capable of rising to all its possibilities; but when tested in the crucible of war, they proved to be not all they were thought to be. But they are older. They have devoted the whole of their lives, on very small pay, to the service of their country. They may have been the wrong men in the first place; they may not have been as efficient or capable as the board of selection that chose them in the first instance thought they were. But can we throw these men, many of whom are now over forty years of age, on to the scrap-heap?

Senator PRATTEN.—Then, according to the honorable senator's argument, the military machine is at an *impasse*.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I do not say that.

Senator PEARCE.—You might as well say that because some honorable senators are not up to the mark, the Senate is also at an *impasse*.

Senator GARDINER.—The Government put off 2,000 men at Cockatoo Island

Dock recently without much thought as to their future.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I am not dealing with the affairs of the Cockatoo Island Dockyard. I am dealing with the affairs of the Defence Department.

Senator GARDINER.—But I have quoted the Cockatoo Island Dock employees as an illustration why it should not be so difficult to get rid of the Defence Force inefficients.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—During the debate an assertion that many of the men who landed at Gallipoli had never fired a shot brought an indignant denial from Senator Cox; but I regret to say that there is a certain amount of truth in it. This probably arose from the fact that when the First Australian Division left Australia they took out of the country pretty well every rifle that was available, so that subsequently, when the first reinforcements were sent to Egypt, they were shot across to Gallipoli without further training. But that did not happen with very many of the reinforcements, and it is one of the lessons that we have learned from the war. We realized that we did not have in Australia sufficient equipment. The Minister, by interjection, told us this afternoon that these shortcomings with regard to equipment are under consideration, and are being dealt with. Personally, I am extremely glad to know that this is so.

Senator GARDINER.—General White, the man you have been talking about, was the author of that statement.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I would not be in the least surprised, because I know from personal experience that the statement was true. I was an officer in the original Force. I was in command of a company on Gallipoli, and received as reinforcements forty or fifty men who, according to their own statements, had never used a rifle. This, no doubt, was due to the fact that the Commonwealth Parliament in the early days of the war, had not the good fortune to number amongst its members men of military experience; but in future perhaps we shall not repeat these mistakes. I sincerely hope not.

This is all I desire to say on the Bill to-night. There are many other points which I hope to have an opportunity to

refer to later; but they occur to me as being principally matters for the Committee, and when that stage is reached, I propose to deal with them.

Senator PEARCE (Western Australia—Minister for Defence) [8.29].—I am glad the Bill has received the close attention of honorable senators, because I would be the last to desire that, in connexion with defence, we should place on our statute-book any measure that was unsound in principle, or, speaking in the strict and not the ordinary sense of the word, unpopular. Ours is a citizen Force, and, accordingly, we have to be more careful in our legislative provisions than if we were dealing with a regular army. We must see to it that the legislation commends itself to the good judgment of the people of Australia, and that in every sense of the word it is popular. I suppose there is no more unpopular subject at the present time than that of defence. We are now in the backwash of the war, and those who, a few years ago, were applauding the "brass hats" and the "tabs," and were cheering them as they went down the street, are now prepared to heave a half a brick at them. The soldier a few years ago was a popular figure, but now the war is over he is viewed from a different stand-point. There are many who called for three cheers a little while ago who now have nothing but sneers for him and the system under which he is trained.

Senator CRAWFORD.—That is hardly a fair statement of the position.

Senator PEARCE.—We should not be led away, in considering this question, by the catch-cries used by those who depreciate anything done by our Military Forces. In the discussion to-day I have heard the same terms applied to our Forces that were used when any proposition was brought forward to provide for the defence of the Commonwealth. We have heard terms this afternoon that were employed during the war by those who were doing their very best to prevent the Commonwealth providing an efficient Military Force to assist in our protection.

Senator FOSTER.—I am the one who referred to "brass hats"; but I do not wish it to be thought that I was in any sense referring to the soldiers and the service they rendered.

Senator PEARCE.—Senator Foster used the term "brass hats," and he is one of those who rendered service to his country. But some of the expressions that were used by him this afternoon were used at the street corners and at meetings by those who were doing their best to obstruct our military programme and prevent Australia from doing what was right and proper during a time of crisis. I do not wish to suggest that Senator Foster used those terms in the same way.

I am somewhat disappointed that, with the exception of Senator Drake-Brockman, none of those honorable senators who criticised the application of the British Army Act to our Forces in time of peace, as well as in time of war, dealt with the question which I raised in introducing the measure, and which is really the pivot of this matter. If we do not train our officers under one disciplinary code in time of peace, on the outbreak of war they have to carry out certain disciplinary measures under a system with which they are unfamiliar. Senator Elliott did not deal with that question, nor did any of the other honorable senators who criticised the proposal to embody the British Army Act in our legislation. But it is an essential point to be considered, because if we do not apply the British Army Act in time of peace we are bound to apply it in time of war. Parliament has recognised that, and in the Defence Act has provided that when our Forces go to war they must automatically come under the British Army Act. That provision has always been on our statute-book. The point has never been raised that we should not embody the Army Act in our legislation; but the soldiers want to know what code they are to operate under.

Senator ELLIOTT.—But it should have been raised.

Senator PEARCE.—We have been going on in this way for a period of twenty years, and no one, either in the discussion this afternoon or elsewhere, has shown that our Forces suffered any hardship by reason of the fact that they came under the British Army Act in time of war. Every honorable senator who held military command in the recent war knew that, although he was operating under a Commonwealth Defence Act and its regulations, he was automatically transferred to the British

Army Act, and it took him some time, especially during the stress of war, to familiarize himself with the new code.

Senator FOSTER.—Does the Minister for Defence maintain that the same disciplinary measures are required in Australia in times of peace?

Senator PEARCE.—No; nor is that intended. I mentioned during my second-reading speech that any punishment laid down in the British Army Act which is in excess of what is provided in our Act cannot be imposed. That provision will operate in time of war as well as in time of peace. I mentioned that under the Army Act desertion is punishable by death, and that during the war, because that provision was inconsistent with our Act, or was a punishment in excess of what we had provided, no Australian soldier was punished by death for desertion.

Senator PRATTEN.—Would not the British Army Act increase the number of offences?

Senator PEARCE.—No; we provide for exactly the same offences, and, as Senator Drake-Brockman pointed out, the British Army code is the result of centuries of experience during war and peace. He said it was a perfect code, and that was demonstrated in the recent war, because it imposed no greater hardship than our own code would have imposed in the matter of punishment for offences. It has worked well as the result of experience, and in the judgment of those officers who have operated under it we think it advisable to embody it in our legislation, so that our officers will go on training under conditions which they will have to submit to in time of war.

I think it was Senator Pratten who pointed out that officers should be trained in the operations of courts martial, so that they might be familiar with the instrument they were to handle.

Senator PRATTEN.—I think some of us are in trouble because we are of opinion that the British Army Act was designed for a regular army.

Senator PEARCE.—The British Army Act applies to the Regular Army, and also to the British Territorial Army, which is a volunteer citizen force, and

always has applied to the volunteer forces of Great Britain. If the honorable senator will peruse our Defence Act in conjunction with the clause we are embodying in the amending Bill, he will find that a great part of it does not affect our Citizen Forces in their capacity as citizens, as they will not be dealt with under the Army Act, but under our own Defence Act. For instance, the provisions of the British Army Act will not affect the training of our Senior Cadets, neither will they affect their registration, liability to train, and detention, as all those matters will be dealt with under our Defence Act and its regulations. These are the points which affect the man or the boy, as the case may be, in his capacity as a citizen, as it is only when the Forces go into camp to train for war that the British Army Act will operate, as far as the disciplinary code is concerned. In these circumstances, officers and men in camp will be operating under a code under which they will be dealt with in time of war.

Senator PRATTEN.—The Army Act will not increase the number of military offences?

Senator PEARCE.—No.

I desire to follow up the criticism directed against the Bill, and to come to the question raised by Senator Elliott in regard to the portion of the measure which deals with appointment to commissions in the Citizen Forces. If the honorable senator's intention were given effect to in Committee we would exclude from appointment to commissions in our Forces, except by going through the ranks, and undergoing subsequent examination for promotion step by step, any Australian who was not a member of the Citizen Forces before the outbreak of the war, although he might have served in the Australian Imperial Force during the war. We would also exclude all Australians who served with the British Forces and obtained commissions during the war—as well as all Canadians, New Zealanders, and South Africans who had rendered similar service—and who subsequent to the war took up their residence in Australia. We would be prevented from including such men irrespective of the rank they obtained in the field. Above all things, we require in Australia

during the next few years the benefit of the experience gained by men who have won their rank on the battlefield, and we should be broad-minded enough to put them on an equal footing whether they were members of the Australian Imperial Force, served in the British Forces, or were New Zealanders, Canadians, or men from South Africa who served and won their rank on active service. The clause in the Bill will give the Governor-General power to grant commissions in the Citizen Forces to such men. To do other than what the Bill provides would be to make a close preserve for those who were in the Citizen Forces of Australia before the outbreak of war, irrespective of the service they may have rendered during the war. The provision in the Bill is a broadening one, is intended to give a wider field of choice, and above all, to give us the opportunity of utilizing the experience of men, no matter where they come from, and particularly of those men who won their commissions in the field.

Senator PRATTEN.—Does the Bill provide for preference over those who never went away?

Senator PEARCE.—There is another clause dealing with the question of preference. Where a Citizen Force officer has had war experience he will have preference over one who has not; but the clause to which I have referred does not deal with that particular phase of the question. Senator Elliott has given notice of certain amendments, and he stated during the course of his second-reading speech that he intended to submit proposals which will provide that no officer shall be superseded in war time or in peace without notice, and that consequent on that notice he shall have the right of appeal ultimately to the civil Courts of the land and to obtain damages against the officer who superseded him.

Senator ELLIOTT.—That is a travesty of what I meant.

Senator PEARCE.—That is the essence of the proposition.

Senator FOSTER.—I do not think that is correct, because the honorable senator did not refer to the question of damages.

Senator PEARCE.—I am not concerned with what the honorable senator said, but what his amendment really means.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Will the Minister read my amendment?

Senator PEARCE.—I must confess that in my early days as a Minister for Defence I knew very little or nothing about military matters. It was once said that when a Federal Cabinet was being formed all the portfolios were filled with the exception of that of Minister for Defence, which was left for "the fool of the family." I do not know whether that was so when I was first appointed, but I admit that I knew nothing or little about military matters, although I had, to the best of my ability, given attention to such matters when they came before Parliament. Knowing that, I set myself to study military matters from the political standpoint, and endeavoured to ascertain what was the duty of the political head of a Military Department. In this connexion I remember a conversation which I had with the late General Bridges, who advised me to read a book which was written by Colonel Henderson, namely, *The Life of Stonewall Jackson*. I invite honorable senators to read that book, because it contains a very good lesson for politicians. During the Civil War between the North and South of America, Abraham Lincoln was the political head in the North, and in the earlier stages of that war, he continually interfered with his general officers in the field. He interfered with their strategy, with their appointments, with their commands, and it is a noteworthy fact that, during the first period of the struggle, the North sustained a succession of defeats. Upon the other hand, the President of the Southern States did not interfere with his general officers in the field, but gave them an absolutely free hand, the result being that they had a succession of victories. Lincoln was a big enough man to look around him with a view to discovering where the blame lay. Having done so, he altered his policy, and after the second year of the war, he gave his generals an absolutely free hand in regard to appointments and strategy. He told them that he would judge them by their performances, and that, if necessary, he would displace them in their commands. From the time of this change of policy, the North became victorious, and the South, which, strange to say, altered its policy during the last years of the war, met with a succession of defeats. This latter period was marked by continual interference on the part of the

President of the Southern States with his generals in the field.

Senator GARDINER.—All I have to say is that the Minister's generals should have been a great success.

Senator PEARCE.—I took the lesson to heart, and when I came into office, my predecessor, Senator E. D. Millen, had already appointed General Bridges to the command of the 1st Division. I sent for General Bridges, and said to him, "You will find that, as regards the choice of your subordinate officers and appointments to commands, I shall give you a free hand. The Government will judge you by the results which are obtained in the training camps, and in the field, and if the time should ever come when we think you are unfitted for your present command, we shall recall you. But while you are there, we shall not interfere with you." When General Birdwood was appointed to command the Australian Imperial Force, I wrote him a letter in similar terms. From the commencement to the close of the war, I never interfered with General Birdwood or with General Bridges either, in the matter of their appointments, or in the disposition of their commands. How could I at the other end of the world, even if I knew anything about military matters, rightly tell General Bridges who he was to appoint to the command of his battalions or brigades? How could I tell General Birdwood that? Undoubtedly, in the discharge of their duties, with the responsibility which rested upon them, they continually had to supersede officers. Why, Senator Elliott himself has superseded plenty of other officers who were senior to him in the Citizen Forces, simply because of his ability as a soldier and his qualifications as a commander. He was placed over their heads on account of his possession of those very qualities. These officers had no grievance against him. I suppose that soldiers are just as human as we are. Does anybody mean to tell me that the commander of a division or of an army corps is going deliberately to place in command of his division, brigade, or battalion, men whom he knows to be incompetent, and to pass over competent men? Is it not a fact that the commander of a battalion, if he is incompetent, may bring about the defeat of an army corps? Will a commander place

an incompetent there, knowing that if that defeat comes, he himself will be disgraced? During the recent war we saw some soldiers whose names loomed large, recalled, and to-day they are numbered amongst the "duds," as they are described. Surely every soldier, recognising that, will choose the man whom he thinks is the most competent to fill any particular position. Senator Elliott used for quite a different purpose an illustration which I intend to apply in this connexion. He spoke of a staff officer who, according to his statement, had exhibited great incompetency. If that officer were under General Elliott's command, will anybody say that the decision of General Elliott to supersede him should be liable to an appeal by that officer to me, and that, ultimately, perhaps, General Elliott should have to defend an action for damages? What sort of a time would a general officer commanding have if he knew that every time he superseded an officer, not only would his action probably be brought before his political head upon the other side of the world, but that when he returned to Australia he might have to face litigation with heavy damages and costs?

Senator FOSTER.—Is the Minister arguing that General Elliott was superseded because of incompetency?

Senator PEARCE.—No. But if General Elliott's ideas are incorporated in this Bill, an incompetent officer will have a right of appeal to the Minister for Defence in Australia, and also the right to go before a Supreme Court Judge in an action for damages.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Only if he can show that I had acted from malice or from improper motives.

Senator PEARCE.—That would be a matter of evidence. But there is the possibility. General Elliott might say, "I superseded this officer because I regarded him as incompetent." In reply, the officer might say, "I was superseded because of malice. General Elliott showed malice upon a previous occasion by using towards me language which was more forcible than polite." In dealing with these matters, we have not merely to insure justice being done to the officer who has been superseded, but also to his

superior officer. We must have some regard for the position in which we place that superior officer. Shall we get efficient forces and efficient commanding officers if we lay the latter open to the anxiety, harassment, and possibly monetary loss that would be involved by the insertion in this Bill of a provision such as Senator Elliott proposes?

Senator ELLIOTT.—Only if they act improperly.

Senator PEARCE.—Right does not always triumph, even in our Law Courts.

Senator WILSON.—But if an employer displaces a man in the industrial world, he has to show just cause for his action.

Senator PEARCE.—Dealing with industrial matters in the "piping times of peace" is vastly different from dealing with men on the battlefield.

Senator WILSON.—But when we get back to peace times, we should right as many wrongs as possible.

Senator PEARCE.—Let me deal with that aspect of the matter. I have had many applications made to me by officers and men who have felt aggrieved at something which was done during the war. Years after the events have occurred, these individuals have demanded that there should be an inquiry into them. There was an inquiry into them upon the other side of the world, where the events actually occurred—such an inquiry as could be made at the time—and a certain judgment was passed. It may have been the judgment of the commanding officer or of a court martial, or of an army corps commander, who had to choose his divisional generals. But at any rate, he was on the spot, he had all the circumstances before him, and he gave his judgment. Our fighting force has since been scattered to the four winds of the earth, and all we now have is the paper record of these events. In such circumstances, what sort of an inquiry could we institute? We cannot summon the witnesses, many of whom are dead, whilst many others are outside of Australia. Even those who are in Australia have not to-day the same recollection of the events in question that they possessed at the time of their occurrence.

Senator PRATTEN.—The honorable gentleman will admit that, in some instances, the accused was not even called upon to state his case?

Senator PEARCE.—Quite so. An army corps commander, in choosing his divisional general, would say, "I think that Jones is a better man than Smith or Robertson." Would he be likely to alter his opinion if Jones argued for a month that he was a better man than Robinson?

Senator PRATTEN.—I am not referring to events of that sort. I am alluding to cases in which there was a miscarriage of justice.

Senator PEARCE.—That matter has been so ably dealt with by Senator Drake-Brockman, Senator Foster, and others, that I do not propose to traverse the ground again. Of course, there are abuses of justice from time to time, even in our civil Courts; but taking the Australian Imperial Force by and large, its members got a "fair spin," as the saying goes.

Senator DUNCAN.—I know of corporals who thought their colonels were a joke, simply because they themselves were not made sergeants.

Senator PEARCE.—There has been some criticism indulged in, both of the personnel of the Military Board and of the exercise of its functions. But in the case that is troubling Senator Elliott, another body than the Military Board had a say. Senator Elliott's trouble is that certain officers who were junior to him when the war began, attained, improperly he alleges, by the exercise of the functions of General Birdwood, a higher rank than he did, and that the Commonwealth Government arrived at the decision in regard to citizen officers, that they should retain in the Citizen Forces the same substantive rank that they held in the Australian Imperial Force. I should like to say here that the Government, which is supposed to be so much under the domination of the permanent military officers, did not give them a like concession. In some cases they obtained three or four steps in rank on active service, but where they are given higher rank they get only one step in substantive rank and one step in honorary rank. The result of the decision of the Government, and of what took place in the Australian Imperial Force, was that there were officers of the Citizen Forces here senior to Senator Elliott who were junior to him before the war commenced.

When the divisional organization was formed, we had to choose the divisional commanders. Senator Elliott is wrong in

saying that they were chosen by the Military Board. There is a Promotion Board in existence which consists of General White, another distinguished soldier who has not been mentioned, but will stand criticism in this Chamber—I refer to General Chauvel, the Inspector-General who was Commander of the Desert Mounted Column—and also General Sellheim. These three officers form the Promotion Board, and they brought forward their recommendations, as to those who should command the divisions in the Citizen Forces. Senator Pratten raised a question about General Monash, and, for his information, I may say that I was anxious to obtain General Monash's view of the recommendations made by the Promotion Board. So, before the recommendations went to the Military Board, I gave instructions that General Monash was to be consulted because he had been the Corps Commander, and these officers had served under him. General Monash concurred in the recommendations that were made by the Promotion Board, and they then went to the Military Board. They were confirmed by the Military Board, and were then presented to me for Ministerial approval, and I approved of them.

Senator PRATTEN.—The Minister will remember that I did not object to the appointment of the divisional commanders.

Senator PEARCE.—That is so, but the honorable senator mentioned General Monash, and I desire to inform him and other honorable senators that General Monash's opinion of the recommendations of the Promotion Board was obtained.

General Elliott appealed against the decision of the Military Board, and I have here the papers connected with his appeal. I propose only to read the summing up of the final letter. It has an important bearing on this Bill, because it is assumed by General Elliott that an injustice was done him in this matter. I want to show clearly that no injustice was done, and that, in these appointments, no supersession took place even on the ground of seniority.

Senator PRATTEN.—Did not Senator Elliott suggest that there was something in the nature of a threat having been carried out?

Senator PEARCE.—I do not know what the honorable senator suggests. I

am dealing with the facts. The following is the final letter, dated 12th April, sent to the District Commandant to be sent on to General Elliott:—

I am commanded by the Military Board to acquaint you, for the information of Colonel (Hon. Brigadier-General) H. E. Elliott, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., D.C.M., with reference to your C21/8 of 16th March, 1921, that the further representations made by that officer have been considered by the Board.

2. Brigadier-General Elliott is to be informed that nothing in the Australian Military Regulations or the custom of the Service entitles an officer to demand an inquiry. A.M.R. 458 is quite clear as to the mode to be followed by an officer who considers himself wronged, and he is bound to abide by the decision of the highest authority referred to therein, i.e., the Military Board, of which the Minister is President.

Quite apart from this aspect of the case, it has never been customary, nor is it at all advisable, that a purely military matter should be inquired into by a Supreme Court Judge. This course had been suggested by General Elliott.

or other civil Commissioner. The creation of such a precedent would have far-reaching effects, and militate against the very foundations of military discipline. Attention is also invited to the fact that by A.M.R. 115 no officer is entitled to claim promotion as a right.

3. I am further to say, in reference to the contention of Brigadier-General Elliott, that he has been superseded—

(a) It is the custom of the Service to promote senior officers and appoint them to command by selection, and not seniority. Frequently the choice lies between several good and well qualified officers, and those not selected can have no just right or cause to cavil at the action of those whose duty it is to make the selection. No officer can expect to be judge of his own merits or to select or appoint himself to any rank or position.

(b) During the war the Cabinet decided that citizen officers who gained higher rank in the Australian Imperial Force than the rank they held in the Australian Military Forces should be promoted to the higher rank in the latter Force. Under this provision the officers specifically objected to by Brigadier-General Elliott, viz., Sir J. Gellibrand, K.C.B., D.S.O., and Sir Thomas Glasgow, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D., who had been Major-Generals in the Australian Imperial Force, became Major-Generals in the Australian Military Forces also, and similarly Brigadier-General Elliott, who ranked as a Brevet Colonel in the Australian Military Forces, was himself promoted to the subsequent rank of Colonel and Honorary Brigadier-General, which he had gained in the Australian Imperial Force.

It will be seen, therefore, that there was really no question of supersession, but rather the carrying out of a principle of which the Government of this country had approved, and under which Brigadier-General Elliott himself was advanced over a large number of Lieutenant-Colonels who were senior to him in the Australian Military Forces, but who did not obtain the rank of Colonel or Brigadier-General in the Australian Imperial Force.

I have here a list of those officers.

It is obvious if Brigadier-General Elliott's contention is sound and pursued to a logical conclusion he has superseded a number of officers who should have been senior to him.

Senator ELLIOTT.—If they had a right, it should be conceded. Two wrongs do not make a right. If I superseded other officers, they may have a grouch, too.

Senator PEARCE.—The letter continues:—

(c) It having become necessary to regulate the seniority of senior officers involved, the Minister took occasion to appoint a Committee to advise him on the subject, which included such senior and distinguished officers as General Sir W. R. Birdwood and Lieutenant-Generals Sir H. C. Chauvel and Sir J. Monash, and their recommendations were eventually adopted.

Whilst General Birdwood was here I got these officers to advise me as to seniority in the Australian Imperial Force, because that seniority was being carried over into the Australian Military Force—

In this connexion it may be pointed out that section 16A of the Act gives power to grant such rank and allots such regimental seniority to officers of the Citizen Forces as are approved by the Governor-General, on the recommendation of the Military Board, and that section 22 empowers the Governor-General to appoint or promote any person for distinguished service in time of war in certain circumstances.

It is recommended—

- (a) That Brigadier-General Elliott be informed of the substance of the above, and
- (b) that the Board do not consider that Brigadier-General Elliott has any just or reasonable grounds for considering himself aggrieved.
- (c) That the Military Board do not propose to take any further action with regard to his complaint, which has received the fullest consideration by the highest tribunal to which any officer or soldier has the right under the regulations to appeal.

I may say that on both occasions when General Elliott, in his capacity as a citizen officer appealed, the appeals came to me, but I did not attend the Board meetings.

The procedure in the Defence Department is this: These matters come to the Minister although he is President of the Board. Even if he attends the Board meeting, and the Board, by a majority, decide upon a certain course, that does not bind the Minister. I have always claimed for myself the right to veto any recommendation of the Board, if, in my judgment, it is wrong, notwithstanding that, as President of the Board, it might be held that I was bound by its recommendation, because I was present at the meeting. These recommendations came from the Board meeting to me along with other papers. "I read the whole of the proceedings of the Board, and General Elliott's letters amongst other papers, and to the best of my ability informed my mind as to the right course to adopt.

Senator Elliott raised the question of the wearing of medals by relatives of soldiers. The repeal of the section in the original Act which is proposed by this Bill does not mean that we shall prevent the wearing of medals by soldiers' relatives. There are to-day regulations which, in certain circumstances, permit of medals and other decorations being worn. When the Defence Bill was under consideration here, that particular provision was put in, and we have the anomaly that in one case the wearing of medals is provided for under the Act, and in other cases by regulation. If Senator Elliott will refer to the clause to which he takes exception he will see that there is a reference to those who are "lawfully entitled to wear" a decoration. By the use of the phrase "lawfully entitled to wear," it will be possible for us, by regulation, to define the persons who are lawfully entitled to wear decorations, and we propose to deal with the matter in that way.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Why not put all in the Bill?

Senator PEARCE.—Because, as Senator Elliott as a soldier knows, different decorations are proposed, and frequently there is a change made with respect to those who may, or may not wear them. These matters cannot be dealt with in the Bill, because the conditions are always being altered. I understand that there is still to come a medal to be known as the "Allies' Medal." We do not yet know what conditions are to be attached to the wearing of that decoration. When we know the conditions, we shall be able

to deal with the matter by regulation. If we did not adopt that course, it would be necessary, every time a fresh decoration was proposed, to introduce an amending Bill to provide how, and by whom, it should be worn. Honorable senators will see that it is obviously better to deal with such a matter by regulation than by an Act of Parliament.

There is one other point I wish to mention in regard to the supersession of officers and the right of appeal to the Governor-General in Council. I have been very much impressed by the point made by Senator Drake-Brockman as to the senior officers. I do say that a senior officer stands in a different relation in this regard to a junior officer, because as the honorable senator has rightly pointed out, a junior officer appeals, not against what the Military Board have done, but against what his commanding officer has done. On the other hand, in the case of a senior officer, as in the case of the divisional generals, the matter will have been dealt with first by the Promotion Board, and then by the Military Board, and the appeal would go from the Military Board to the Minister. The only appeal which I conceive it would be possible to make to give effect to General Elliott's proposal would be an appeal to the Governor-General in Council, and that, after all, would involve no alteration in substance of the present practice. I have already pointed out that the Minister has the right to veto a recommendation of the Military Board. If the appeal were to the Governor-General in Council, by whom would the Governor-General be advised? He would be advised by the Minister for Defence. So that what the honorable senator proposes would be a change of form, but not a change of substance.

Senator NEWLAND.—The Governor-General in Council might disregard the Minister's advice.

Senator PEARCE.—No. The Governor-General would never do that. Let me take the case of an appeal to the King. It is not an appeal to the King in person, but an appeal to the King in Council. It is the Army Council that gives the decision, and the soldier appeals against that decision to the King in Council. The King takes the advice of the Minister for War, and I say that in practice the chances are fifty to one that

the Minister for War sends the matter to the Army Council.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—The difficulty will not be got over in the way I suggested; but it ought to be got over somehow.

Senator PEARCE.—The only way it might be got over is not so much by a provision in the Bill as by the Government making a statement of policy that, in the case of senior officers, where appointments are made direct from the Military Board, appeals would be made a Cabinet matter. We cannot do that in a Bill, because we do not recognise the Cabinet in our legislation. I can give an instance of a similar undertaking being given to Parliament. In the early stages of the war we gave an undertaking to Parliament that every case of a German who was a naturalized British subject would be dealt with by the Cabinet. As a fact, every one of those cases was dealt with by the different Cabinets. Similarly, an undertaking could be given that in the case of senior officers any appeal would go to the Cabinet. I would have no objection to that personally; but I do not know how Cabinet would view it. That, however, is the only appeal that it seems to me would be any real change in substance. The appeal to the Governor-General in Council would be a change merely in form.

I deprecate discussion on the personal matters that Senator Elliott has brought forward. I am sure he and other honorable senators will understand that if I do not follow them here I am not to be understood as agreeing with them. I simply do not know anything about the matter that Senator Elliott mentions. I am not aware whether General Hobbs clapped him on the shoulder and told him that "this would be remembered against him." It is an *ex parte* statement made by a man who is interested in the matter, and it must be taken for what it is worth. I am not in a position to say what took place between the honorable senator and General Hobbs or General White.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Then why not grant the inquiry that is asked for?

Senator PEARCE.—I do not see that any good purpose can be served by an inquiry. If I granted an inquiry for General Elliott, because he is a member of the Senate, I would also have to grant an inquiry for Bill Smith who is not in the Senate. I do not see that I am called

upon to grant an inquiry to an officer because he happens to be a member of Parliament, and to refuse one to an officer who is not a member of Parliament.

Senator PRATTEN.—Is it not the custom to accept the word of a member of Parliament?

Senator PEARCE.—It is the custom, and it is also the custom to allow the other side to put their case. I do not propose to accept a statement made here without hearing what other people concerned have to say in reply. Personally, I should not be willing to grant such an inquiry unless this Parliament and this country are prepared to concede a similar inquiry to every other officer who feels himself aggrieved. If we opened up that sort of thing we should be kept busy for years to come, because Senator Elliott is not the only officer by scores, or even hundreds, who feels that at some time or other he has had a grievance.

Senator ELLIOTT.—You have admitted that senior officers ought to have some sort of appeal.

Senator PEARCE.—I have not; at least, not in war time. What I have been saying refers to the remark of Senator Drake-Brockman that, in appointments to our Citizen Forces in Australia, something of the sort should be provided in the case of senior officers. This is new matter, because a new set of circumstances has come in. We never had divisional commands before, and we never had citizen officers administering these things. Now we have them, and they are appointed upon the recommendation of the Military Board. I see that there might be a set of circumstances which would make it necessary to allow an appeal to somebody other than the Minister who has approved of the Board's recommendation. I am prepared to look into that question to see whether something can be done, but I do not want it to be understood that I commit myself to that in time of war. I certainly do not, nor do I think Senator Drake-Brockman would ask it. In time of war, if you appoint an army corps commander you must leave him to pick his divisional generals.

Some criticism was offered by Senator Gardiner regarding compulsory training being, as he said, overloaded and non-effective because a good deal of the time

of the Instructional Staff is taken up in what might be termed clerical work. That certainly is very cogent criticism, and has been, in the past, very justifiable criticism. We are endeavouring, so far as the finances will permit, to give clerical assistance to the Instructional Staff, so that that portion of their time which has hitherto been occupied in making up returns will not be so occupied, and that they will be able to give more attention to actual instruction, but we are hampered in that matter by financial considerations.

Senator Gardiner's other criticism comes down to this: That, in effect, he says that a citizen army such as ours is less efficient than a standing army. He said, that, instead of spreading our training which is of a limited character over such a large number, we would get a more efficient army if we had fewer to train, according to our ability to train and arm them, and had them trained properly. No doubt, that is true; but I am satisfied that there is one thing that this country will not stand for, and that is a regular standing army. The principle upon which the defence of this country is based is that of a citizen army. If it is to be a citizen army, then military training should be the obligation of all citizens who are physically fit. The king-pin of our Defence Act is that it makes no difference between rich and poor. All have to do their service. If we narrow down the number; if we say that we will eliminate some, we shall bring in the fatal criticism that in that elimination social and other factors have been given a part. The only way to avoid that is by the ballot, and even against that I heard and saw, during the war, criticism by our American cousins that the ballot could be got at.

In his criticism of the obligation which we are placing upon those who enter the Military College, Senator Gardiner seems to misapprehend what the college is for. It is not an ordinary educational establishment in the sense that a university or high school is. The college is established for the definite purpose of training the instructors of our Citizen Forces. It is not to train the men who are to command our Citizen Forces, but to train the schoolmasters for our Forces. When we

have put them through the college, entirely at the expense of the Commonwealth, giving them a free university training and keeping them while they are there, Senator Gardiner says that we should let them elect whether they will come to us or go to somebody else. That would be a very generous sporting offer, but I think it would be very disastrous to the Military Forces, because the best of our graduates, the men who would really make the best instructors, would all be culled out, and we should get what was left. Thus, instead of our Military Forces being made more efficient, they would become less and less efficient. If the country is of opinion that the Commonwealth is in a position financially and otherwise to do that sort of thing, let it start a university or high school for that purpose, but do not turn this institution, which was intended for that specific purpose, into an entirely different one.

Senator GARDINER.—What are our Universities doing in providing training for doctors and lawyers?

Senator PEARCE.—They are formed for that specific purpose. I do not know that all the Australian Universities give free training. In Western Australia the University gives practically free training, but it does not keep the students, whereas in our Military College, we not only train them but practically keep them.

Senator Foster spoke about the Judge-Advocate-General. We have such an officer connected with our Citizen Forces, and so we are working along the lines that the honorable senator suggests.

Senator Pratten referred to this Bill as dealing with the imposition of militarism such as went on in the war. This Bill does not impose militarism. I sometimes rub my eyes when I see the term "militarism" applied to Australia, the least military of all the nations, and one of the few that does not possess a standing army. Citizen defence is the very antithesis of militarism. This Bill is to assist in perfecting our Citizen Forces. It does not add a single permanent soldier to our Forces. How can it be said that this Bill is fostering militarism?

I ask Senator Pratten to remember also, when he tacks that criticism on to the Army Act, that it is not an Act of itself that brings militarism, but the way in which that Act is administered and the persons by whom it is administered. This

Act is going to be administered, not by permanent officers, for the permanent officers will be but as a drop in the bucket so far as the administration of the Army Act is concerned, but entirely by citizen officers, with the exception of our Permanent Forces. Let me show Senator Pratten how that comes about. If a citizen soldier commits an offence it will be when he is either on parade or in camp. The citizen soldiers are commanded in almost every case by Citizen Force officers, although there are a few exceptions in the technical Forces, and therefore it will be the citizen officer who will set the Army Act in motion. If a court martial is constituted, it will be composed of citizen officers belonging to the particular unit that happens to be in training or on parade.

Senator PRATTEN.—And not permanent officers?

Senator PEARCE.—No; they are Citizen Force officers. The permanent officer is the instructor of the Citizen Force officer, except as to the General Staff and in one or two other cases. It is the Citizen Force officer who has the actual command, and carries out the training in camp. He has under him a staff of permanent sergeants-major, and he has permanent adjutants to assist him in his command; but the actual command is with the Citizen Force officer. The Army Act, therefore, will not be administered by the militarist with the brass hat, but by the citizen, the man who, after the camp is finished, will go back to his factory, his farm, or his shop. There is an exception, which is that our Permanent Forces are commanded by permanent officers; and if a permanent soldier commits an offence he will be tried by a court martial consisting of permanent officers. But our Permanent Forces number altogether about 2,000, as compared with 60,000 or 70,000 or 80,000 in our Citizen Forces, and are, therefore, insignificant in numbers.

Senator ELLIOTT.—How long will it be before you have permanent divisional commanders?

Senator PEARCE.—We have one permanent divisional commander in General Brand, but, with that exception, they are all Citizen Force officers.

Senator ELLIOTT.—For how long?

Senator PEARCE.—I do not know. It will depend on experience, because this system is on trial. It may be found to work satisfactorily. Personally, I hope and believe it will, and I trust the day will come when all our divisions will be commanded by Citizen Force officers.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee:

Clause 1 agreed to.

Progress reported.

Senate adjourned at 9.32 p.m.

House of Representatives.

Thursday, 21 April, 1921.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson) took the chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

TASMANIAN MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—I wish to know from the Postmaster-General if the contractors for the mail service between Tasmania and the mainland have asked to be relieved of their contract, or have suggested any alteration of its terms?

Mr. WISE.—A communication has been received from them, and the matter is being considered.

Mr. ATKINSON.—Can the Postmaster-General say if there has been any variation of the contract?

Mr. WISE.—We have received a communication from the contractors which is now under consideration.

BRITISH ARMY.

WEARING OF MOUSTACHES.

Mr. WEST.—Has the Assistant Minister for Defence had his attention drawn to the fact that the military authorities of Great Britain have decided that the men shall wear moustaches? I ask the honorable gentleman further whether, before anything is done in that direction here, he will give the matter consideration, and allow the officers and men to decide what they will wear?

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—I do not promise to give the matter serious consideration.

EVASION OF INCOME TAX.

SIR JOHN HIGGINS' SALARY.

Mr. TUDOR.—I wish to know, in reference to the statement of the Prime Minister yesterday, that Sir John Higgins receives £10,000 a year free of Australian income tax, whether any individual, company, or association, can make itself free of income tax? If it can be done, I should like to know how?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I know of no way in which a man may free himself of his income tax obligations, though, of course, some one else may pay his tax for him.

Mr. TUDOR.—Then, the press has wrongly stated the position.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I know nothing of that, nor do I know anything about the salary of Sir John Higgins beyond what I have read in the newspapers. It occurs to me that he is getting a good salary, and can afford to pay a little income tax.

EXPORTATION OF FRUIT.

Mr. GREGORY.—Last week the Minister for Trade and Customs promised that a report would be presented to the House giving information regarding the fruit exported from the various States this season. I ask the honorable gentleman when may we expect it?

Mr. GREENE.—I am not quite sure, but I think that the information will be ready to-morrow.

ANZAC DAY.

CASUAL WORKERS—CLOSING OF BUSINESS PLACES.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Can the Prime Minister inform me whether the casual employees of the Government in the Works and Railways Department and the Shipbuilding Department will be paid for Anzac Day?

Mr. HUGHES.—I cannot answer that question off hand, beyond saying that whatever practice is followed ordinarily in regard to such employees and payment for public holidays will be followed in connexion with the observance of Anzac Day next Monday. The Government will treat all its servants in regard to the celebration of that holiday exactly as it treats them in regard to the celebration of every other public holiday observed by

the Commonwealth. Anzac Day will be regarded by the Government as a public holiday in the full sense of the term, and I shall endeavour to let the honorable member know later exactly how the men, about whom he inquires will be affected.

Yesterday, I made an appeal through the press to the employers and shopkeepers of Victoria, and particularly of Melbourne, to close their establishments on Anzac Day, so that their employees might attend the ceremonies and services of that great day. I hope that every business man will show in this way that he has a due appreciation of what the day means to Australia.

Later.

Mr. HUGHES.—Casual employees will be paid.

COST OF REMOVING TREES AT DARWIN.

Mr. BOWDEN.—Has the attention of the Assistant Minister for Defence been called to the statement in the newspapers that the Defence Department has paid £700 or more for the removal of two trees from an aeroplane ground at Darwin? Is the statement correct? If not, what work has been done for the money?

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—I read the statement in the press, and knowing something of the so-called working men of Darwin, I was surprised that the smallest tree could be removed for the expenditure mentioned.

Mr. MATHEWS.—A most indiscreet reply.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—It is a slur on the working men of the Northern Territory.

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—The so-called working men of Darwin are the greatest Bolsheviks in Australia. I have no hesitation in saying that. In any case, they have no votes.

ARBITRATION COURT.

REDUCTION OF HOURS.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Is the Prime Minister aware that claims in the Arbitration Court for the reduction of hours cannot be heard because three Justices are not available? Is he also aware that, in New South Wales Judge Beeby deals with cases of this kind himself and has reduced the hours in many industries. Will the right honorable gentleman have

the number of our Justices increased, or have the law amended so that these cases can be heard by one Justice?

Mr. HUGHES.—The honorable member's question, like all Gaul, is divided into three parts, and I shall answer it accordingly. First of all I am not aware that there is any application for a reduction of hours, which cannot be heard owing to a deficiency of Judges. All those applications which were before Mr. Justice Higgins at the time when the Act, of which the honorable member is aware, was passed, are still before him, and he can award any hours he pleases in regard to them. It is only fair to say that although those cases have been before His Honour for, I should say, five or six months, some of them are not yet decided. My answer to the second part of the question is that Mr. Justice Powers disposed of about twenty-four cases in, I think, a little under three weeks.

Mr. BLAKELEY.—The agreements were arrived at by the men concerned. Mr. Justice Powers merely brought them together.

Mr. HUGHES.—What else are any of the Judges there for? Is it the idea of the honorable member that the Judge should bring the parties together and not get them to agree? My answer to the second part of the question also answers the third part.

HIGH COMMISSIONERSHIP.

Mr. MAKIN.—As the term of the Right Honorable Andrew Fisher as High Commissioner in London expires to-day, will the Prime Minister say whether a successor has yet been appointed, or whether any member of the Cabinet is to be selected for the position?

Mr. HUGHES.—The term of office of the Right Honorable Andrew Fisher expires on the 22nd April. I have already explained to the House that the Government do not propose at the present moment to appoint any one in his place. I purpose leaving for London next week, and on my arrival there I shall endeavour to see that the interests of Australia do not suffer. On my return, the Government will make an appointment to the vacant High Commissionership. As to who will be appointed, that remains to be seen.

TAXATION COMMISSION.

Mr. FOLEY.—Can the Treasurer say when the Income Tax Commission will be visiting Western Australia, and when the report of that body is likely to be available to Parliament?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I had a conversation with the Chairman of the Commission two days ago on the eve of his departure for Tasmania, where, I understand, the Commission is now taking evidence. I understood from the Chairman that the Commission will proceed to Western Australia immediately after their labours in Hobart are concluded; therefore, it should not be many days before they take their departure for the West. I am as anxious as any honorable member to get the report of the Commission, because very much depends upon it, and I have urged upon the Chairman the desirability of making an early report on two or three of the very crucial questions at issue. I know the questions in which the honorable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Foley), and the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory), are particularly interested, and I shall facilitate a decision upon them at the earliest possible moment.

GRATUITY TO PRIME MINISTER.

Mr. BRENNAN.—As section 45 of the Constitution states *inter alia*—

If a senator or member of the House of Representatives directly or indirectly takes or agrees to take any fee or honorarium for services rendered to the Commonwealth, or for services rendered in the Parliament to any person or State, his seat shall thereupon become vacant—

I ask the Prime Minister, in relation to a substantial gratuity which is said to have been made to the honorable gentleman, whether he will be good enough to inform the House, in order to enable it to determine whether the matter should be referred to the High Court or other competent tribunal, as to the names of the donors of this gift, and the reasons assigned by them for making it?

Mr. HUGHES.—The answer is "No."

Later:

Mr. NICHOLLS.—I desire to ask the Treasurer if the Prime Minister has paid taxation upon that sum of £25,000 which was presented to him some time ago? And, if not, why not, seeing that every

other person is called upon to pay taxation if in receipt of more than £156 per annum?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I decline to reply to these personal and contemptible questions.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—Order! It must be quite evident to the House—and it is certainly patent to myself—that a number of the questions being asked this afternoon, as well as many of those asked on previous days, are not such as should be put to Ministers at all; and certainly they are not of such urgency that they cannot be set down upon the business-paper. I have several times pointed out that questions without notice should only be asked on matters of great public importance, or if they have to do with matters of such urgency as not to permit of the delay occasioned by their being placed on the notice-paper. Still, as long as Ministers care to answer questions without notice, I do not feel called upon to intervene. I express the hope, nevertheless, that the practice of asking unimportant questions will be discontinued.

Mr. NICHOLLS.—By way of personal explanation, I desire to say that when I asked my question I naturally thought it was one of great public importance, seeing that there might possibly be a chance of adding £5,000, by way of taxation, to the revenue of the country. That was my reason.

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! That may be a matter of importance, but it is not urgent.

PERTH GENERAL POST OFFICE.

Mr. GREGORY presented the report of the Public Works Committee together with the minutes of evidence upon the proposed extension of the General Post Office, Perth.

Ordered to be printed.

BASIC WAGE COMMISSION.

Mr. PROWSE.—I ask the Prime Minister how much the Basic Wage Commission's investigation has cost, and how long it is going to continue its work?

Mr. HUGHES.—I cannot answer the question off-hand, but I shall obtain the information for the honorable member.

Mr. BLAKELEY.—Mr. Piddington having answered certain questions asked by the Government, and such answers

being totally dissented from by practically the whole of the Commissioners who represent the employees, I ask the Prime Minister whether he will call the Commission together again in order that it may, as a body, express its views upon those questions?

Mr. HUGHES.—I see no reason at all for that. The position, as stated by Mr. Piddington, appears to me—and the honorable gentleman, I presume, is asking for my opinion—to be unanswerable. It is supported by the statistics supplied by Mr. Knibbs, and until those are disturbed by facts equally reliable I am not disposed to call the Commission together again. If honorable members are dissatisfied, they can make out a case; but they must show me that the facts—and I am not talking about the reasoning—as furnished by Messrs. Piddington and Knibbs are not reliable. If they are reliable, that ends the matter, and no further investigation is called for.

IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTURE.

Mr. MAKIN.—Seeing that the Prime Minister has stated that he intends to leave for London next week, will he now inform the House exactly when and on which vessel he will sail, and will he furnish the names of the staff by whom he will be accompanied?

Mr. HUGHES.—No, I shall not.

CADET TRAINEES.

Mr. WATKINS.—Is the Assistant Minister for Defence aware that quite a number of cadet trainees were recently taken from West Wallsend, and had no food throughout the whole day in which they were bound, on board train, for Rutherford camp? Is the Assistant Minister further aware that on the arrival of the trainees at the camp, where it was raining, it was found that no provision had been made, and that there was no accommodation for the trainees other than the wet ground on which to sleep? Will the Assistant Minister confer with the Minister for Defence, and see that the responsible parties are punished?

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—I will see the Minister for Defence concerning the matter, and whatever steps may be necessary will be taken.

COCKATOO ISLAND DOCKYARD.

APPOINTMENT OF ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. BAMFORD.—With regard to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the scandals at Cockatoo Island Dockyard, will the Prime Minister undertake to make the inquiry as open as possible, so that every phase of the whole matter may be investigated? I have been told that a two-story house has been built out of material purloined from Cockatoo Island. Does not the Prime Minister consider that such allegations should be fully and openly investigated?

Mr. HUGHES.—I may say that I wish I had known of the matter mentioned by the honorable member when I was building a little bit of a place up at Sassafras. However, I quite see the force of his point. I shall make the investigation open. I have reason to believe that every effort will be made to cover the whole matter up. I say that all the evidence must be taken in public; the press must be admitted; everybody who has evidence must be allowed to give it. The only qualification I would add is that this statement is not to be regarded as a sort of permission to keep the Commission going for ever. Beyond that I make no qualification.

DELIVERY OF BUDGET.

Mr. FENTON.—There seems to be an impression prevailing, both inside and outside of the House, that the delivery of the Treasurer's financial statement for the current year will be delayed as long as possible. Can the Treasurer now inform honorable members whether he intends to deliver his Budget statement as soon as possible after the financial year has closed?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I can only say at the moment that the Budget speech will be delivered at the first convenient opportunity.

CRUISER ADELAIDE.

Mr. RILEY.—I placed on the notice-paper a fortnight ago certain questions regarding alterations to the cruiser *Adeelaide*. The Minister for the Navy then informed me that the information would be secured. A long while has elapsed, and I now ask the Minister to try and let me have the particulars before the meeting of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Cockatoo Island Dockyard.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—I explained to the honorable member when he first asked his questions that they involved the collection of a considerable amount of information. I was desirous that the particulars should be fully and properly secured. That accounts for the delay. I am doing everything possible to expedite the furnishing of the necessary answers.

SHIPBUILDING AT WALSH ISLAND.

Mr. WATKINS.—In view of the large number of men necessarily being discharged consequent upon the stoppage of shipbuilding activities at Walsh Island, cannot the Government even now let that yard have the building of one of the boats which are on the programme to be built at Williamstown? I would remind the Minister in charge of shipbuilding that the works at Walsh Island were really established to carry on the Government's programme of ship construction.

Mr. POYNTON.—The decision in regard to shipbuilding in Australia is that the Government are to give the work to our own two yards, and I am only carrying out that policy.

Mr. RILEY.—Walsh Island is one of our yards.

Mr. POYNTON.—It is not.

Mr. RILEY.—It is in the Commonwealth.

Mr. POYNTON.—We have not increased our programme of shipbuilding; but I succeeded in getting control of some of the ships which were to have been constructed in private yards, which fact has enabled me to carry on work in our own yards that, otherwise, I could not have placed there.

INVALID AND OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

Mr. NICHOLLS.—Has consideration been given by the Government to the many requests made in connexion with the raising of the rates of invalid and old-age pensions? If so, what action have the Government taken?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I have given the matter the fullest possible consideration, and I do not see my way clear to comply with the requests made to me from all parts of Australia to increase pensions to 20s. or 30s. per week.

Mr. RILEY.—You can surely give some increase.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I have got as much on hand as I can manage just now.

TUBERCULAR WAR PENSIONERS.

Mr. CAMERON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation, *upon notice*—

1. What is the number of ex-members of the A.I.F. suffering from tuberculosis who are receiving war pensions?

2. Of these, how many are receiving a pension at the rate of £4 per week?

3. What is the number of tubercular soldiers granted the above rate of pension since December last?

Mr. RODGERS.—The Commission advises as follows:—

1. No record is kept of the number of war pensions granted in respect of each war disability, but a return prepared to 31st December, 1920, indicated that there were approximately 900 members of the A.I.F. suffering from tuberculosis. These comprise men suffering all degrees of incapacity, the majority of whom are receiving treatment in departmental institutions.

2. Sixty-two.

3. Fifty-one.

TELEPHONE METERS.

Dr. EARLE PAGE asked the Postmaster-General, *upon notice*—

1. Whether he is in favour of telephone subscribers having a meter on their own instruments to enable them to register their own effective calls?

2. Is it a fact that an Australian invention—known as the "Noble" Telephone Meter—which is said to be fair to the Department and the subscriber, has been successfully tested out for automatic and common battery telephone systems, and is now in operation in the State Engineer's Office at the General Post Office, Sydney?

3. If so, when may the telephone subscribers reasonably expect to be afforded the opportunity of having these meters installed on their own instruments?

Mr. WISE.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. Yes, provided that a meter can be obtained which will operate reliably in conjunction with the services which are installed in the Commonwealth.

2. The Noble Telephone Meter has not been successfully tested out for operation on common battery or automatic telephone systems. It is not now in operation at the State Engineer's Office at the General Post Office, Sydney.

3. It is not proposed to adopt the Noble Telephone Meter.

AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS.

Mr. RYAN asked the Postmaster-General, *upon notice*—

1. Is it a fact that the Government still disallow certain American newspapers from coming into Australia?
2. If so, why?
3. Will the Postmaster-General give the names of the different papers that are so black-listed?

Mr. WISE.—This is a matter which comes within the province of the Trade and Customs Department, which has furnished the following replies:—

1. Certain publications, some of which may be regarded as newspapers, are prohibited from being imported into Australia, but the prohibition does not apply to American newspapers only.
2. The prohibition is due to the blasphemous, indecent, or obscene nature of the publications.
3. This information is published in the *Commonwealth Post and Telegraph Guide*.

"CONFERENCE" STEAMERS.

RATES OF FREIGHT.

Mr. McWILLIAMS asked the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Whether the Commonwealth Government or the Manager of the Commonwealth Line of Steamers has entered into any agreement or arrangement, definite or implied, with the so-called "Conference" Line, or other shipping combine or shipping companies, in fixing the rates of freight, coastal, Inter-State, or overseas?

Mr. HUGHES.—The Commonwealth Government Line has entered into no agreement or arrangement, expressed or implied, of any sort with the so-called Conference line. In overseas, coastal, and Inter-State trade it fixes its own freights.

EXPORT OF WHEAT.

FREIGHT ARRANGEMENTS.

Mr. GREGORY asked the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

1. Whether there is any truth in the statement published in a Sydney journal that "about the end of last year the Wheat Board entered into a contract for approximately 1,000,000 tons of freight at £7 10s. per ton"?

2. If not, was any large freight contract entered into, and at what rate per ton?

Mr. HUGHES.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. The statement is incorrect.
2. The Australian Wheat Board does not consider it advisable at present to make publication of its freighting arrangements.

NORTHERN TERRITORY.

REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT.

Dr. MALONEY asked the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Will the Government introduce a Bill this session to give the Northern Territory representation in the House of Representatives, providing that a majority of the members signify consent?

Mr. HUGHES.—The question of giving the Northern Territory representation in the House of Representatives is at present under consideration by the Government. As I have previously stated, it is not the intention of the Government to submit any measures of legislation for the consideration of the House this session.

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND CUSTOMS.

ACTING COMPTROLLER AND COMMISSIONERS—CIGARS, IMPORTED AND MANUFACTURED.

Mr. JAMES PAGE asked the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

1. Is it a fact that there are Acting Collectors of Customs in the different States of the Commonwealth?

2. If so, will the Minister say when he intends to make permanent appointments; also when does he intend to appoint a Comptroller-General?

Mr. GREENE.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. Yes.

2. At an early date. The position of Comptroller-General of Customs is not vacant, but the officer who occupies that position is at present engaged in other duties.

Mr. GREGORY asked the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

1. How many lbs. of cigars were imported during the year 1919-20?

2. How many cigars were manufactured in Australia during the year 1919-20—

(a) by hand;

(b) by machine?

3. What was the amount of Excise paid—

(a) on hand-made cigars;

(b) on machine-made cigars;

(c) on Australian-grown leaf used in the making of cigars?

4. What was the amount of duty paid on imported leaf used in the making of cigars?

5. How many persons are stated to have been employed in the manufacture of cigars during 1919-20—

(a) on machines;

(b) on making cigars by hand;

(c) as assistants to cigar makers; and
(d) do these figures include those employed in the making of cigarettes?

Mr. GREENE.—The information is being obtained so far as possible.

QUEENSLAND LOAN APPLICATION.

Mr. CORSER asked the Prime Minister, upon notice—

Whether he has received any definite proposals from Mr. Theodore, the Premier of Queensland, with reference to a loan of £2,000,000 of money or any other sum for construction of railways in the Upper Burnett for soldiers' settlements, and/or immigrants from Great Britain? If so, has the proposal been considered, and with what result?

Mr. HUGHES.—The Commonwealth Government have received communications from the Premier of Queensland on the subject of the State being granted a loan for the construction of railways and roads to open up areas suitable for the settlement of immigrants. The matter is at present under consideration by the Government.

ARBITRATION COURT.

Mr. MAKIN asked the Prime Minister, upon notice—

1. Whether it is possible for an industrial or trades' organization to have a claim for the reduction of working hours in industry heard in the Commonwealth Arbitration Court as at present constituted?

2. If the number constituting the Judiciary of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court is not sufficient to function in such cases because of the amending Act of 1920, when does the Government intend to fully constitute that Court?

Mr. HUGHES.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. Yes; but until a second Deputy President is appointed the power to make an award increasing or reducing the hours of work is controlled by section 9 of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1920.

2. The difficulty of making arrangements at present for fully constituting the Court arises from the announced intention of the President to resign his office at an early date.

WAR SERVICE HOMES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Mr. MAKIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation, upon notice—

1. What is the number of applications made in South Australia for War Service Homes?

2. What is the number of applications approved and passed?
3. What is the number of homes completed?
4. What is the number of homes at present in course of construction?
5. When does the Minister anticipate the finalizing of all applications received by the Department to date?

Mr. RODGERS.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. 1,690.
2. 513.
3. Forty-five. In addition, 362 existing dwellings have been purchased for applicants, and seventeen mortgages have been lifted.
4. Fifteen.
5. Arrangements have been concluded with the South Australian Government for the completion of approved applications, and satisfactory progress is now being made.

POST OFFICE REVENUES.

Mr. WISE.—On the 8th April, 1921, the honorable member for Newcastle (Mr. Watkins) asked me the following question:—

What is the annual revenue of the following post and telegraph offices:—Adelaide, Perth, Hobart, and Newcastle?

I promised the information would be obtained. The following is the reply to the honorable member's question:—

The revenue of the following post and telegraph offices for the year ended 30th June, 1920, was:—Adelaide, £256,862; Perth, £207,000; Hobart, £78,773; Newcastle, £67,002. The three first-mentioned offices are chief offices, and include certain miscellaneous revenue such as earnings for terminal rates on cable traffic, earnings in connexion with the international transit of mails, receipts for sale of old stores, and some other miscellaneous items of revenue not embraced by the revenue at an ordinary post-office, such as Newcastle.

PRINTING COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Mr. CORSER presented the third report of the Printing Committee, which was read by the Clerk, and agreed to.

PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Papua.—Annual Report for Year 1919-20.
Ordered to be printed.

Defence Act.—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1921, Nos. 69, 70, 73, 74, 75, 79, 80, 81.

Lands Acquisition Act.—Land acquired under, at Darlington, Western Australia—For Postal purposes.

Public Service Act.—Promotion of J. R. Halligan, Home and Territories Department.

Treaty of Peace (Germany) Act.—Regulations amended—Statutory Rules 1921, No. 78.

SUPPLY (Formal).

PICTURE FILM INDUSTRY — INVALID AND OLD-AGE PENSIONS — INCOME TAX — EXEMPTION — ARBITRATION COURT — PUBLIC SERVICE: SALARIES — BASIC WAGE: COMMISSION'S REPORT — CRUISER "ADELAIDE" — REFERENDUM, INITIATIVE AND RECALL — LIEUT-COLONEL WALKER'S DISMISSAL — MILITARY AND NAVAL PENSIONS: CASES OF HARDSHIP.

Question.—That the Speaker do now leave the chair, and that the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply—proposed.

Mr. MAHONY (Dalley).—[3.9].—I desire briefly to direct attention to a matter of grave importance to a very large number of people in Australia, who are suffering from the effects of the pernicious operations of a Picture Film Combine, whose manipulations ought to be made public. I trust that the Government will appoint a Committee to make a thorough investigation with a view to preventing these people from carrying on as they do to-day, absolutely squeezing out of existence all Australian attempts to embark in the picture industry, and leaving Australian picture theatregoers absolutely at the mercy of American film producers. The Combine in existence to-day is known as the Australasian Film Company. Its operations are camouflaged by the use of a name which would convey to most people the impression that it is an Australian company operating an Australian industry. As a matter of fact, it is an American Combine, which does not produce one picture in Australia, but imports the larger percentage of its films from the United States of America. It has under its control almost the whole of the city picture theatres, including those of the Union Theatres Limited, Spencer's, West's, and J. D. Williams', while, quite recently, an arrangement has been made whereby the new firm of J. C. Williamson and Taits are working in conjunction with this American Combine. If a showman attempts to present in Australia a

purely local production, a representative of the Combine will immediately wait upon him and inform him that unless he is prepared to agree to the Combine's terms, and give it a big percentage of the proceeds derived from the presentation of its pictures, it will refuse to supply him with a programme, so that he will have only the one picture to show. In this way, a picture showman's business collapses, and his financial ruin is brought about. This has been going on for some while, and it is about time the matter was publicly ventilated, and action taken to stop these people.

Mr. FENTON.—What would the honorable member suggest as a means of protecting our local picture film producers?

Mr. MAHONY.—It is imperative that we should have a very much increased import duty on films, so that the Australian producer may have a chance to compete with this American Combine.

Mr. FOLEY.—Does not the honorable member think that the Combine would immediately put up prices?

Mr. MAHONY.—The present import duty is ridiculously low, and the Combine has complete control. Last year 17,000,000 feet of films were imported by the American Combine. The members of this Combine have control of the whole of the pictures that are being shown, and unless a picture theatre proprietor will agree to their terms they will not give him a programme, with the result that he is obliged to close his doors. By way of illustration, let me cite the case of a film known as *The Silence of Dean Maitland*, a very fine Australian production, which did much credit to the picture film industry of Australia. The moment an attempt was made to show that picture at the Lyceum Theatre, Sydney, a representative of the Combine informed the man who was conducting the theatre that if he did not take it off they would deprive him of the whole of their pictures, thus leaving him with only the one picture to show. The proprietor of the Lyceum refused to do this. The result was that the whole of his regular programme was withheld by the American Combine, and he had to close down. This Australian production has thus been forced out of Australia by the action of an American Combine. To-day it is practically impossible to induce

a showman to show it. Another illustration of the methods of the Combine relates to the filming of that great Australian work, *The Sentimental Bloke*, which was written by a very brilliant young man in Australia, and arranged for screening by an Australian artist. It is one of the finest Australian productions, we have; but by the operations of this American Combine, it has been forced out of Australia. It cannot be shown here. If a showman attempts to present that picture he will be closed up, unless he agrees to the outrageous demands of the Combine.

Mr. JOWETT.—Have these facts been placed before the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene)?

Mr. MAHONY.—I do not know. I am availing myself of this opportunity to place them before, not only the Minister, but the House and the country generally. It is a matter that should not be dealt with behind closed doors.

Mr. HIGGS.—Why not wait till the Tariff is before us and let us get on this afternoon with the motion relating to the Imperial Conference?

Mr. MAHONY.—This is a matter affecting the welfare of the people of Australia. When the honorable member was sitting on this side of the House he would never forgo an opportunity to ventilate public grievances. This I consider to be a serious grievance under which an Australian industry is labouring, and I am, therefore, ventilating it to-day. Having briefly stated the facts, I shall ask the Government to take effective steps to loosen the grip that this Combine has on an Australian industry.

Mr. FOLEY.—The honorable member suggests that a high duty would bring about that result?

Mr. MAHONY.—In the first place, I would urge the Government to appoint a Select Committee with the powers of a Royal Commission to force, if necessary, the giving of evidence and to investigate the operations of the whole Combine. In this way the Government would obtain first-hand information.

Mr. FENTON.—Would not the action of which the honorable member complains amount to a restraint of trade?

Mr. MAHONY.—It is a restraint of trade, but the unfortunate picture showmen are in the grip of the Combine to such an extent that if they dared to complain publicly at this stage they would

be put out of business just as was the man who was showing *The Silence of Dean Maitland*. Picture-show proprietors are threatened that unless they agree to the terms and conditions imposed by the Combine, they will be put out of business. I am credibly informed that the Combine demands 35 per cent. of the proceeds of a picture before they will allow it to be shown. These people from America, who do nothing whatsoever towards the production of Australian pictures, practically charge Australians a licensing fee of 35 per cent. of the takings from the presentation of a picture filmed in Australia. It is about time that sort of thing was stopped, and the Government ought not to regard the position lightly. I am speaking on statements made to me by people engaged in the industry, and I should not so speak unless I was satisfied of their sincerity and reliability. Mr. Spencer was the pioneer of picture production in this country, and in ten years he and those associated with him made £400,000 out of local productions. There was no Combine in those days.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Was all that money made out of local pictures?

Mr. MAHONY.—Yes. Mr. Spencer erected a studio at Rushcutters Bay, Sydney, where he produced for the screen the well-known play, *The Fatal Wedding*, at a cost of £400, and from its exhibition gained £18,000. I quote these figures in order to give some idea of the enormous profits which this American Combine must be making, and to suggest the dangerous power and influence they can wield over those engaged in the local industry. When Mr. Andrew Fisher was Prime Minister there was a duty of 2d. per foot on imported films; but I understand that subsequently, Mr. Jensen, when Minister for Trade and Customs, under the discretion given to him by the Trade and Customs Act, reduced that duty to 1½d. By that Act the Minister for Trade and Customs is given power, if he thinks a local industry cannot reasonably supply the wants of the community, to lower the duty, within certain limits, or, on the other hand, if an industry is able to meet local requirements, to increase the duty.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Without reference to Parliament?

Mr. MAHONY.—Yes; that is quite legal and legitimate under the Act, and I make no complaint on that score. From

the moment that Mr. Jensen reduced the duty the Combine began to grow and increase in strength—began to get its grip on the local industry. There are many illustrations that could be given of the effects the Combine has had—how it has closed up picture shows and threatened to withhold its own productions if any exhibitor produced a local work. I have no desire, however, to labour the question. We all know that the picture industry is one that has come to stay. It will be one of the greatest educational factors in civilization, and, provided we have a decent type of pictures of educational value, it must do incalculable good. But the Australian community must not be left at the mercy of an American Combine, whose sole idea is, not the education of the people, but the control of the industry, with a view to still greater profits for itself. Such a position is not in the interests of Australia generally; it is certainly not in the interests of the young folk of this country that, when they visit a picture theatre, they should be continually shown American slang, which almost makes one sick to look at. Good old English, as we know it, is quite sufficient for us, and it ought to be good enough for use at picture exhibitions; in any case, our young people ought to be taught pure language. The claws of the American Combine must be clipped in so far as they affect this country. I hope that some of the Ministers present will take a personal interest in this question, and direct the attention of the Cabinet to it, with a view to steps for the protection of the local industry. We ought to have pictures of Australian character, to build up Australian sentiment and an Australian ideal. Let the pictures tell us something about our own country, about the problems that confront and trouble this community. America is big enough to look after her own interests, and we ought to look after ours. I trust the Government will do something to rid Australia of the incubus of the American Picture Combine.

Mr. FOLEY (Kalgoorlie) [3.27].—I desire briefly to support the position taken up by the honorable member for Dalley (Mr. Mahony). For some years I have felt that there is need for improvement, not only in regard to the picture show industry as it affects the Tariff and

the revenue, but also in regard to the pictures themselves, as they affect all classes of minds in Australia. During the short time I have been a member of this House I have noticed that when honorable members rise with a desire to ventilate a grievance, and to emphasize the need of protection or preference for an industry in Australia as against some institution or persons in another part of the world, they immediately suggest, "Up with the Tariff" as a cure. I do not think for one moment that if the Tariff on films were increased 100 per cent., those who are now putting foreign pictures on the Australian market would be affected one iota; because immediately the Tariff goes up the price to the frequenters of the theatres will also go up. We had an example of this when the entertainments tax was imposed. My own opinion is that taxation of that kind is a matter for domestic legislation by the State Governments and Parliaments. It is not the picture show proprietors who pay that tax, because the charge for admission is now 6d., and so forth, plus the tax; indeed, it would seem that these exhibitors are able to "fool the people," not only "some of the time," but "all the time." When an honorable member ventilates a subject of the kind now before us, he ought to be prepared with some suggestion of a way out of the difficulty. We should endeavour to imbue our people with Australian sentiment, and the most effective way of bringing about an improvement in the pictures, and of increasing their effect for good, would be, not to impose a very high duty on imported films, but to cause the production of pictures in Australia. Then, if American producers wished to keep this market, they would have to come here, and make their pictures, and we could control them, or if the Government had not the constitutional power to do so, we could appeal to Australia for an amendment of the Constitution which would give us that power. Of course, if the duty on films is not sufficient from the revenue point of view, I am willing to have it increased. But what I suggest for the improvement of our picture shows and the inculcation of Australian sentiment is that the picture theatres should be given notice that within twelve months at least one-fourth of their programme must consist of pictures produced in Australia;

that within two years one-half must consist of Australian productions, and that at the end of three years three-fourths of their pictures must be locally produced. That would do more for the industry here than, increasing the duty on imported films. It would benefit Australia from the money point of view, and would inculcate Australian sentiment in the minds of our young people and of our old people, too, many of whom need it as much as the young. We could also insist that at least one-fourth of the pictures in a programme should be educational. That would do away with much of the objection to picture shows. No one can accuse me of being a wowsler, yet there are American pictures being shown in Australia which I consider most suggestive, and to which I should not like to take any young woman related to me. I cast no reflection on any one, but I say that there should be a woman on the Board of Censors. She should be a married woman who had had children. The maternal instinct of such a woman would materially assist the Board in preventing the circulation of objectionable and harmful pictures. I hope that the Ministry will give this matter their earnest consideration. I am a Protectionist, and I wish to see Australia producing pictures with Australian ideas, but we must not entirely exclude pictures from other countries, because it is necessary for our people to know what is taking place elsewhere, and to be able to compare Australian ideas with those in other countries, and thus make any little improvements that may be necessary to keep us abreast of them.

Mr. CHARLTON (Hunter) [3.36].—I desire to voice a grievance regarding the treatment of the aged and infirm of this country. According to the statement of the Prime Minister yesterday, no effort is to be made this session to improve the conditions of the aged and infirm. That statement will be a shock to the majority of the people of Australia. This is not a party matter; it is a humanitarian matter. And, seeing how much the cost of living has increased of late years, it is surprising that Parliament permits it to go unheeded. Conferences to consider the subject have been held recently, and shire councils have considered it. No doubt, other honorable members, like myself, have had many communications concerning it, and have been asked to use their influence to get the pension rates in-

creased. Yet no opportunity is to be given us to do anything. I find it difficult to realize that our old and infirm people can get along on the present pension of 15s. per week. Great injustice is done to them by not increasing the rate. It may be urged that the financial position precludes the Government from making any increase, but I believe that the people of Australia are willing to pay more in taxation to increase the old-age pensions, provided that the money thus raised shall be ear-marked for the purpose. At a conference at Hamilton, recently, many of those present were political opponents of the honorable member for Newcastle (Mr. Watkins) and myself, but they recognised that this question is above party, and that the time had arrived to relieve the destitution of the aged and infirm. The conference suggested—and I think honorable members have received a letter embodying this suggestion—that a wealth levy should be made to raise enough money to increase the old-age pension to 20s. per week.

Mr. BAMFORD.—I am with you all the way in that.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I am glad to hear it. The suggestion was a laudable one, because it came from men who have wealth, and will have to contribute. The Treasurer, in reply to a communication from the honorable member for Newcastle and myself, said that there are now 138,736 pensioners; that the average rate of pension per annum is £37 16s. 2d.; that the annual liability of pensions is £5,250,000; and that an increase of 15s. per week in the rate would mean a further liability of £5,500,000. He points out further, in regard to the liberalization of the property and earning qualifications, that an increase of 10s. per week in earnings would increase the pension expenditure by £750,000 per annum. The liberalization of the property qualifications would also have a considerable effect, because only 14 per cent. are now reduced on account of property conditions. Many aged persons have a place which they let in addition to that in which they live, and they get from 8s. to 15s. per week in rent; but it is to be remembered that the pension rate is reduced when the income from property exceeds a certain sum, and that the cost of living is now very high. This country is wealthy enough to provide adequately for

its old and infirm. The war has, of course, severely strained our finances, and it will be a considerable time before we can hope to obtain release from this strain, but we should not lose sight of the necessities of our aged poor. Notwithstanding the war, statistics show that the number of persons with banking accounts has increased, and that many persons now possess much more than they used to possess. The question is, should we not get money from these persons to assist the poor? Those who are wealthy should not object to being called on to assist their less fortunate brothers and sisters, who, in all probability, have had much to do with the acquirement of their wealth. It is due to the efforts of the pioneers of this country, who bore the heat and strain of the day, and are now infirm and aged, that others have become wealthy, and something should be done to assist these old persons. If the Treasurer finds that a majority of members favour an increase in the pension rates, will he, notwithstanding the statement of the Prime Minister, be permitted to propose taxation to recoup the increased expenditure of the Government, and thus to balance his accounts? He should not mind who pays, so long as he can get the money necessary to increase the pension rates. If we do not deal with the matter this session, it cannot be dealt with for at least a year, and it is crying for attention. Having regard to the increased cost of everything, I wonder how the pensioners manage to get along at all. If the Treasurer would take a more favorable view of this matter, notwithstanding the present financial stringency, and allow the House an opportunity of deciding, I believe the House would agree to a more generous treatment of the old-age pensioners and to the Treasurer obtaining taxation for the purpose from some other source. I am aware that he will not have the money at his disposal without imposing further taxation, but the people who have the money should not object to an additional impost for the sake of the aged poor.

Mr. RILEY.—I can show him where he can get the money.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I believe we could save a good deal by cutting down the defence expenditure. The time has arrived when some step in that direction should be taken. Most of us told the people, during the war, that they were engaged

in a war to end war, but the huge expenditure in connexion with defence would make it appear that we are expecting other wars in the near future. We should be able to cut that form of expenditure down to a minimum. We might be able to save a couple of million pounds in that way, and if we can do that, and expend the money in paying increased pensions to the old people, such expenditure would be more beneficial to the country than defence expenditure, from which we get no return. It would be a good thing for the world if an understanding could be arrived at which would prevent all wars in future, so that everybody might be employed in the production of things for the betterment, instead of the destruction, of mankind. If we can cut down our armaments and increase the old-age and invalid pensions we shall be helping the country far more than we are doing now by the heavy expenditure upon defence.

Yesterday, I made reference to the subject of income taxation, and I shall lose no opportunity of calling attention to the anomalies of the present Act. When the Act was passed in 1915 the exemption was fixed at £156, but since that time the cost of living has increased exactly 60 per cent. I said at the time that an exemption of £156 was too low, and I opposed it, but my party did not agree with me. However, if the cost of living has increased 60 per cent. since 1915, there is an unanswerable argument for the increase of the exemption to at least double what was fixed then. If we were to increase the exemption to £300 we should be doing no more than a fair thing, but, instead of increasing it, we have, in the case of single men, reduced it from £156 to £100. Every single man who earns £100 per annum clear is supposed to pay income tax, but there are many men in the country, following professions and other callings, who cannot live on £2 a week, particularly if they live away from home. Even a girl who earns her living at typewriting must pay income tax if she earns over £100, notwithstanding that the excess may be required to assist in the maintenance and education of other members of her family. There should be but one exemption, and it should be much higher than it is now. Action to that end should be taken at once. I shall be told that we should

wait for the report of the Royal Commission on Taxation.

Mr. RILEY.—It will cost £3,400 to print the Commission's report.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I understand that the Commission has taken voluminous evidence, and that the printing of it will be costly; but, at any rate, the Commission has a great deal of work to do, and a considerable time must elapse before it can present its report. But certain anomalies are so glaring, and amendments of the Act are so necessary, that there is no need to wait for the Commission's report. What is to prevent the Government from introducing at an early date a short amending Bill providing for an increased exemption, pending a further amendment of the Act in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission if they are approved by the Government. There can be no escape from our duty in regard to this matter, and the Treasurer might recoup himself for what he loses in this way by increasing the incidence of taxation on the people who have large incomes. He should get the money he requires, and that is the only way that he can get it. We shall be merely doing justice to those who to-day are working for very low wages if we increase the exemption as I have suggested. The House should have an early opportunity of deciding whether or not it is in favour of such an amendment. As public men we are not justified, after three or four months of recess, in merely dealing with the Tariff for two or three months, and then adjourning for a period while certain matters of urgent public importance are awaiting consideration. The assessments for the current financial year are now being collected, and the collection should be completed by the end of June. If the Act is not amended immediately, the collection for the next financial year will be on the same basis as at present. The returns must show the individual's income for the year ended the 30th June, and unless we act promptly every taxpayer who is in receipt of an income of over £156 will be required to furnish a return for the taxation year ending 30th June next.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—If Parliament amended the Act before the end of the session, could not the amendment be made retrospective in order to apply to the current taxation year?

Mr. CHARLTON.—The taxpayer makes his return in July, and the Department issues the assessment early in

the New Year. If the Act is not amended before the beginning of the new financial year, returns on the present basis will be required, and the Government will not be likely to agree to a retrospective amendment which will upset the departmental arrangements. We must either amend the Act now or leave the law to operate in its present form for the next financial year. This matter is worthy of early consideration by the House.

I asked a question of the Prime Minister to-day in regard to the delay in hearing applications for a reduction of hours owing to the inability to get three Judges in the Arbitration Court. The Prime Minister answered my question evasively. He said, in effect, that Mr. Justice Higgins would not expedite the work of cases which had been listed in the Arbitration Court before the amendment of the law last year, that those cases had been before the Court for a considerable time, and that, although the Judge had power to deal with them, he had not done so. I ask the right honorable gentleman whether there are not cases which do not come within that category, but which have been referred to Mr. Justice Powers, and whether it is not a fact that in consequence of the inability to get three Judges to sit together in the Arbitration Court, applications for a reduction of hours cannot be dealt with. I understand that a statement to that effect was made by Mr. Justice Powers. If that is the state of affairs, it is clear that a necessity exists for either the appointment of three Judges, or for an amendment of the Act, so that hours of labour may be fixed by one Judge. In my opinion, it is farcical to require that hours of labour shall be fixed by three Judges, when one Judge may deal with any other question. In New South Wales Mr. Justice Beeby deals with applications for a reduction of hours, but under the Commonwealth Act we place obstacles in the way of the settlement of disputes by saying that this question of hours of labour must be dealt with by three Judges, and then the Government omit to appoint them. Either the laws should be carried out by the Government, or they should not continue on the statute-book. How are we to maintain industrial peace, if when men bring their case before the Court in a constitutional way the Judge says, "I cannot deal with this question of hours of labour; it must be dealt with by three

Judges, and there are not three Judges." Either the Government should give effect to the legislation passed by Parliament or Parliament should amend the law in order to permit of these applications being dealt with by either two Judges or one. We often hear bitter complaints when the workers seek redress by adopting other than constitutional methods. How can they adopt constitutional methods when we deny them the opportunity? Nobody desires industrial trouble. Throughout my life I have advised the men to adhere to constitutional means of getting justice, but how can they do that if the law provides for a certain thing which is not given effect to by those who administer the law?

When we were discussing the Basic Wage Commission's report the Prime Minister said that the Government would take temporary action pending further consideration of the matter. The Government decided to give all Commonwealth Public Servants a basic wage allowance of £12 per annum and 5s. per week for each child under the age of fourteen years, but instead of adding that £12 to the wage which the employee was then receiving they started from a basis of £196, making the total wage £208, notwithstanding the fact that most public servants were receiving £164. Thus the difference between £164 and £196 was lost to the employees. They complained bitterly, and rightly so, because they have not received justice. Many public servants are not getting the wage to which they are entitled, having regard to the increased cost of living. The Government employees were loyal to the country during the war period, and did their work well. Postmasters in particular did exceptionally heavy work throughout the war, and are continuing to do it, because, in addition to the ordinary departmental work, they pay the war pensions and gratuities. Yet they have received no increase in salary to compensate for the increased cost of living. The Prime Minister is responsible for the position in which he finds himself with regard to the basic wage. In the course of his policy speech at Bendigo, he said—

If we are to have industrial peace, we must be prepared to pay the price, and that price is justice to the worker. Nothing less will serve.

Mr. Charlton.

The Government is, therefore, appointing a Royal Commission to inquire into the cost of living in relation to the minimum or basic wage. The Commission will be fully clothed with power to ascertain what is a fair basic wage, and how much the purchasing power of the sovereign has been depreciated during the war; also, how the basic wage may be adjusted to the present purchasing power of the sovereign, and the best means, when once so adjusted, of automatically adjusting itself to the rise and fall of the sovereign. The Government will, at the earliest date possible, create effective machinery to give effect to these principles.

Later the Prime Minister created the Basic Wage Commission, which reported that a weekly wage of £5 16s. was required to keep a man with a wife and three children. That recommendation rather astounded the Prime Minister, and, notwithstanding his pre-election pledge, and the fact that he appointed a Royal Commission to advise the Government, he set about devising some means of evading the Commission's recommendation. Therefore, if confusion or dissatisfaction has resulted, the Prime Minister has nobody but himself to blame. Since the Commission's report was submitted nothing has been done by the Government to give effect to it. We are told that the Federal Parliament has not the constitutional power to take any steps except in regard to the Commonwealth Government servants. But we have power to deal with our own servants; and why have the Government run away from the Commission's findings? They have never paid the wage which the Commission recommended; but have undertaken to pay £4 per week and 5s. for each child. And, in order to make that appear all right, the Prime Minister stated here some time ago that he had taken the total wealth production of the country into consideration, and had found that, if the basic wage were applied, Australia would not be able to bear the burden of its application; there would not be sufficient margin to carry on. It would be interesting to ascertain exactly what figures were used as the basis of the Prime Minister's argument. I understand that his remarks were based on statistics furnished by Mr. Knibbs for 1918. The figures having to do with that year were very much below those of 1920, because there were increases, meanwhile, in the cost of almost everything. In the period between 1918 and 1920, although

it is difficult to state the exact amount of the general increase, it would probably total between 30 and 40 per cent. In the circumstances it would have been only fair for the Prime Minister to take that very considerable factor into consideration so that his comparisons might bear due weight. Another point is that Mr. Knibbs, in compiling his statistics, has taken into account only the wholesale price. How can any one thus determine the country's full amount of production? Mr. Knibbs takes the price of the manufacturer; and, upon the figures so compiled, the Prime Minister makes his comparisons. The result is that they are fictitious. A very considerable sum must be added to the wholesale price, in some cases amounting even to an increase of 100 per cent. The whole position is unsatisfactory. The Prime Minister stated this afternoon, in reply to a question, that it was for those who thought differently from Mr. Piddington to prove the case for the establishment of the basic wage. If the Government think the basic wage cannot be put into operation without jeopardizing the welfare of the country, they should institute a fresh inquiry. The Commission was a child of their own creation. When they went before the electors the Government announced their determination to appoint the Basic Wage Commission in order to confer a living wage upon all workers; and thus they secured a great many votes, no doubt. But the Government cannot rest now. Mr. Piddington was asked to furnish an answer to the question concerning how the finding of the Commission was to be put into operation. It was a hurried request, and he had not the time to go clearly and properly into the matter. But, in any case, were his figures absolutely correct? No one could get the necessary data to-day, even from Mr. Knibbs himself, on which to work out the position. Even in relation to the cost of living Mr. Knibbs's statistical conclusions are not complete, for he bases his findings only upon certain lines of articles, and does not pretend to cover every necessary item of a household's expenditure. One must go into every aspect. The Commission took evidence from all available sources, and not only from those who were interested from the wage viewpoint. And, upon the evidence secured, its members came to the unanimous

decision that they should report in favour of the basic wage being £5 16s. It is of no use to say that the production of this country will not stand the payment of that wage. If the Government take that attitude, as they do, they have a right to order a further investigation.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The honorable member has been talking for about three-quarters of an hour, and he has already cut up about £6,500,000 sterling.

Mr. CHARLTON.—If the Treasurer will guarantee that the Government will deal with the basic wage during the current session, I will sit down at once.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—For every five minutes that the honorable member continues to speak, there will be another £1,000,000 gone.

Mr. CHARLTON.—All I ask is justice to the workers of Australia, and to our aged and infirm. I think the Treasurer is in sympathy with those ideals, and that the only thing that baulks him from fulfilling them is the finding of the money. There are various ways, but he can certainly impose additional taxation. The fundamental consideration of this Parliament is the welfare of the people. If the Treasurer will indicate that the Government intend to do anything in the directions which I have just indicated, I will say nothing further; but, in the absence of any such assurance, I have to warn him that the time has arrived for honorable members to make the strongest protest against the possibility of Parliament adjourning without having satisfactorily dealt with the two great subjects of the basic wage and pensions. People with whom I talk want to know why the old folk cannot get more than they are now receiving. They say, quite rightly, "You thought it was necessary to increase your salaries on account of the high cost of living. Why do not the old people get a rise also?" Something ought to be done. It is not sufficient for the Treasurer to say that the outlay of so much more money is involved. That money must be laid out, but I realize that a way must be found for securing it in the first instance. While the war was in progress, many Australians amassed great wealth. I do not see why they should not be made to disgorge some of it in order

to add a little to the miserable sum which is given to our aged and infirm, and to increase, by an amount which will furnish a living wage, the weekly pay of our workers. These latter were the people who preserved our country through the years of crisis while others, safe behind their protection, became rich. I trust that, in this particular matter, I shall have the hearty support of the honorable member for Eden-Monaro (Mr. Austin Chapman), who has always taken a lively interest in the subject of pensions, and who, at the present time, has a motion on the business paper dealing with that matter. I am afraid, however, that it will be kept back and blocked.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—Order! The honorable member has just drawn my attention to the fact that he is discussing something which is the subject-matter of a notice of motion upon the business paper of the House.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Yes, sir; but I am just concluding my remarks, and I took care not to allude to the notice of motion until I had arrived at that stage. I trust that the effect of what I have said will be to prompt the Government to inform honorable members exactly what they intend to do, and when.

Mr. RILEY (South Sydney) [4.10].—I compliment the honorable member for Dalley (Mr. Mahony) on the able way in which he brought forward the very important question of imported picture films. The present situation is a disgrace to the Government, and would be to any Government. It is shameful that every moving picture-show in the country should be compelled to take the imported films of a certain Combine—and these films are almost entirely American—and that, if any picture house were to display an Australian film without the permission of the Combine, the latter could withdraw its supplies, and thus ruin the offender. Such a situation should not be tolerated. The Treasurer is anxious to raise revenue. Here is a fruitful source. Why should not the picture people be compelled to pay duty on every foot of film shown every night? They are making enormous profits out of imported films. The public patronize their entertainments every night in the week. The Government need money. Therefore, why not enforce such a duty?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—It would mean, for one thing, that the “threepenny” people would have to pay more for their entertainment.

Mr. RILEY.—If an Australian picture production is filmed, the display should be given free of duty.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Now you want to destroy revenue.

Mr. RILEY.—No; I wish to assist the Treasurer. If he were to impose a duty of 6d. on all imported films he would raise—taking last year's importations as a basis—about £300,000 per annum. I understand that one Combine made £60,000 out of one picture alone. Why should these people exploit the country at a time when the Treasurer is more than ever in need of money? The members of the Combine chiefly live outside of Australia. They send their pictures here, make good Australian money, and take it out of the country.

Mr. MAHONY.—There should be a Committee appointed to investigate the whole business.

Mr. RILEY.—Yes, and it would gather some startling information. We wish to increase old-age pensions. Here is a source from which the Treasurer could finance an increase. The Government would have the commendation of the whole community if they were to act in this way and tax the Combine films entering from the United States of America. It is a disgrace to a wealthy country, having a booming revenue, that we should not more generously assist our old and infirm.

I appeal to all honorable members to impress upon the Government the urgency of the pensioners' case.

About a fortnight ago I asked the Minister for the Navy (Mr. Laird Smith) certain questions concerning alterations to the cruiser *Adelaide*. It is very necessary that I should have the answers before the first meeting of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the Cockatoo Island Dockyard. A slur has been cast upon the workmen who have been employed on the *Adelaide*. It has been stated that the vessel has cost more than £1,000,000, and that it has taken some years to build her. I asked the Minister how many alterations had been made on the *Adelaide*, who authorized them, and what did they cost? It ought not to have taken a fortnight to secure that information; and I cannot understand the delay,

unless it has been for the direct purpose of holding back the particulars until the Commission shall have met. In the interests, both of the men concerned and of the Navy Department, the fullest information should be provided.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—I am anxious to give the honorable member the fullest particulars.

Mr. RILEY.—Then, why should the Minister allow his Department to add to the delay? I hope he will immediately send along a "chaser."

With regard to the basic wage: This Parliament owes a duty to the public. While the wages of public servants have been increased, the workers outside have not benefited. But they were the people who demanded the basic wage inquiry, who collected all the evidence, and who fought their case before the Commission. Legislation should be introduced to give them the benefit of the decision of the Commission. If the Government are looking for further increases to their revenue by means of the Tariff I warn them that they will only gain my vote in that direction if they agree to recognise the basic wage as prescribed by Mr. Piddington's Commission.

Dr. MALONEY.—To do that, there must be a sufficient margin of Protection.

Mr. RILEY.—A great number of those directly concerned are already receiving adequate Protection, but they are not satisfied. They are the people who would fight against any reduction of hours, and against the institution of the basic wage, every time. I hope that, at an early date, the Government will introduce legislation to give to the Arbitration Court power to confer the basic wage, and also to authorize reduction in hours of labour.

The present income tax exemption is ridiculously low; but the most important factor about it is the manner in which, by the operation of the sliding scale, it totally disappears upon incomes of £500 and upwards. In this way the will of Parliament has been misconstrued. There ought to be a clear exemption of £156 on all incomes. I trust that the Government will see their way to bring in machinery whereby the basic wage will be applied. I hope that a larger exemption will be granted in connexion with the income tax, and I trust that the Treasurer will be able to derive from the picture-show Combine some profits which he may be

able to devote to the payment of increased invalid and old-age pensions.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [4.18].—I understand that on account of the fact that a motion dealing with invalid and old-age pensions appears on the business-paper, I am barred from speaking upon them. This is merely a little bit of the fool game of politics, which serves to bring ridicule upon the House. A rule or regulation which comes to us from the old fools or fossils of the British House of Commons prevents us from speaking upon pensions because a certain motion has been placed on the notice-paper. No word of mine must be construed as being adverse to the ruling of Mr. Speaker, who holds the scales of justice evenly in this House. My condemnation lies against these fool Standing Orders that have been adopted by us even without discussion seriatim.

Mr. FENTON.—Could not members on the Government side prevent the discussion of any important topic by placing a motion on the business-paper dealing with it?

Dr. MALONEY.—It is quite possible that by concerted action honorable members could put motions on the notice-paper, and under our fool Standing Orders we would be forbidden the opportunity of discussing the subjects covered by them. My tongue may be tied in the matter of asking for relief for the old men and old women of this country; but I am not prevented from speaking of the pets of the Government House push. When from a thousand platforms we asked the men of this country to go to the Front, we told them that their wives and children would be cared for. When it came to a question of the widow of a man who had been paid £30 per week, with a field allowance of 25s. per day, the Government of the day brought in a Bill to give her a gift of £4,000. Her loss may have been as heartrending as was the loss of Tom Jones, who was only getting 6s. per day. But how much are the Government paying to the children of Tom Jones? He may have left behind him six, seven, or eight children, but the allowance his widow receives is blocked at the fifth child. Could there be a greater infamy than the payment of £4,000 to the widow of the man who was paid £30 per week, with a field allowance of 25s. per day, while the fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth child of Tom Jones, who was only paid 6s. per day, was expected to live on air.

Yet that is the position, and this fool Parliament, elected by the people, who have no power of recall, can do nothing to remedy it. If the people outside had the right of recall who would be carrying on this Tom-fool game?

I suppose that Sir Samuel Griffith was the keenest legal mind that ever came out of Queensland. I have not been able to obtain the whole of the information as to the amount he actually received from the Government, but I am informed that in all he drew over £80,000 from the Queensland State Government, and subsequently from the Commonwealth Government. God only knows how much he received by way of allowance. That information has not been supplied. Here again I draw attention to the contrast between the treatment meted out to him and that which is meted out to the old men and women of Australia. This man with his keen legal intellect knew that there was no pension attached to the post of Justice of the High Court of Australia. He had bestowed upon him the highest honour the world could confer upon a legal man, when he was appointed Chief Justice of a continent. He was paid liberally, but after he had dragged over £80,000 out of the coffers of his country he held out his hand and cadged for a pension. At that time the Treasurer was a gentleman who now represents the void, wherever that is. At any rate, he deserted his country and went into the void. He said, "Yes, Sir Samuel, we will give you £5 per day." I asked for £5 per month for my fellow men and women in their old age; in fact, I had the audacity to apply to the honorable member for Balaclava (Mr. Watt), who was then the Treasurer, for a pension for myself. He referred me to the Commissioner for Pensions. I thanked him for his consideration, but not for sending me to an officer when he knew very well that the law would prevent me from obtaining a pension. However, I submitted my application for two reasons. I wanted, first of all, to show that there was no disgrace in applying for an old-age pension; secondly, I wanted a chance to get level with the cadger for £5 per day. That gentleman's portrait is in the Queen's Hall, where he is depicted wearing a wig made from the tail of a horse. He has gone down to his grave with a stigma on him, namely, that while every old man or old woman in this country was endeavour-

ing to eke out an existence on 15s. per week, he was paid a pension of £5 per day after having drawn at least £80,000 from the Government. After his demise it was left to my lips in this House to pay him the credit that I thought was due to him. I said that for the task he had performed in translating the greatest of Italian poets into English vernacular verse, if he had lost his money by speculation, I would willingly contribute to a fund to recompense him a sum equivalent to the amount I paid in income tax every year. Inquiry has showed me, however, that Sir Samuel Griffith died a wealthy man.

As I am forbidden to speak on the question of invalid and old-age pensions by the operation of an idiotic standing order, I proceed now to a brief reference to the incidence of our income taxation. An income tax properly collected and distributed is one of the most just in the world, that is, if we avoid the use of those wonderful curves which characterize our system. I have never yet met the keenest of accountants who with a pencil and paper could tell one offhand the amount of tax liable to be paid on an income of, say, £755 per year. I have never yet met one who could not tell me the amount due under the State Income Tax Assessment Act. Under the Commonwealth Act the person who makes any contributions to charitable objects is allowed to deduct whatever he pays, provided the amount he pays in this way exceeds £20. Persons can do far more good by the payment of smaller sums than £20 to those who are in need of help, and I think the taxpayer should be permitted to submit a table of the amounts he has devoted to charity with a declaration that the amounts have been so distributed. The average man in this community will not commit perjury for the sake of robbing the Treasurer of a few sixpences in the payment of income tax. Is it not contemptible that in these days of high prices a girl earning £100 per annum, or less than £2 per week, should be compelled to pay income tax? If this Parliament did its duty, it would legislate to put in gaol the profiteers who are battening on the people. When we compel a girl in receipt of an income of £100 a year to pay income tax, we should at the same time pass legislation requiring that food shall be sold at a fair price, and that

all profiteers shall be imprisoned. Under the present régime, however, to be a profiteer is to be one of the most respected members of the community. The income tax as now levied is an absolute fraud. I think it was Gladstone who said it was the duty of a Government to make its laws so simple that the average man could understand them. The only country that has done that is France. Thanks to the genius of a great man, France has the *Code Napoléon*, and Napoleon placed it on record in his memoirs that he had to do his level best to prevent the lawyers from making it a puzzling code. I asked an official of the Taxation Department to oblige me with a departmental ready-reckoner, so that I might assist those of my constituents who pay Federal income tax, and who come to me for help in determining the amount of the tax they should pay. Later on, the Treasurer said that a departmental ready-reckoner which would enable the average individual to ascertain what tax he should pay would be issued, but the departmental publication is such that most people are inclined to laugh at it. The taxation officials to whom I have spoken are sick and tired of the present system. A book comprising a great number of pages is necessary to explain the present Federal income tax, whereas a few lines is sufficient to explain to the people the method of assessing the State income tax. I have not been able to learn of any other country which has such an absurd, even if it be a highly scientific, system as that of the Commonwealth. Is it not ridiculous also that we should have to pay both State and Federal income tax? Surely a law to simplify State and Federal taxation, and to secure economy in its collection, should not be treated as a party measure. Is it not absurd that we, the created thing of the people outside, are not to be permitted to deal with any business other than the Tariff during the absence of the Prime Minister in England? If the Government would agree to bring in at once a measure designed to simplify our system of taxation, and to provide for a uniform tax, I would undertake to vote for it. I am certain that the members of my party generally would assist in the passing of such a measure. Yet, because of the rules of this fool

place, called a Parliament, we must not pass any such measure, no matter how beneficial it might be, during the Prime Minister's absence. The rate of income tax imposed on co-operative societies, which do not pay dividends—which do not amass capital to be hidden away or converted into shares, but exist solely to supply their own members with goods at the lowest possible cost—is also absurd and unfair.

Coming to the question of picture films, I think that every picture-show proprietor should be required by law to include in his programme at least one industrial picture or a film of travel calculated to have an educational value. I am a defender of the average picture show. I certainly have not seen any picture as vile as are some comic operas. I know of no educational influence greater than that of the picture show, and I have always resented the Entertainments Tax Act, under which a person entering a picture theatre is required to pay a special tax. The income earned by picture-show proprietors should be taxed, but it is an infamy to require every person who goes to a picture show to pay a separate tax. Imagine the passing of a law requiring the purchaser of a pair of boots to pay a special tax of 1d. in respect of every 1s. that the boots cost? The entertainments tax is infamous. As to the complaint that has been made in regard to the operations of an American Film Combine, we could encourage and protect the Australian film-making industry by requiring that an Australian film shall be included in every programme. We could also legislate to compel the Combine and others to sell their films at a stated price. If it be true that the Combine is acting in the way described this afternoon, then it is as infamous as the refusal of the millers to supply certain bakers with flour, because they would not agree to build up the price of bread. I suppose, however, that the same old game will go on until the people, the creators of this Parliament, are able to take a hand. God never made anything more powerful than Himself. Parliament is the only created thing of which I know that can make itself more powerful than its creator. In my opinion it will be impossible to put a stop to the corruption, bribery, and fraud which

is rampant in Melbourne and every other Australian city until the people obtain control by means of the referendum, initiative, and recall.

Is it not ridiculous to be told that we must deal only with the Tariff while the Prime Minister is away? If the Tariff were disposed of in a week we would go into recess, and have what some people describe as a holiday; but I would invite those who think I have a holiday during recess to come to my rooms, 513 Elizabeth-street, any Monday morning. If they do they will be quickly disabused. I want it to sink into the minds of the people, who pay for everything—from the salary of the Governor-General to the wages of the policeman—who also pay us—that they should ask those who are seeking their suffrages whether they are prepared to devote the whole of their time to the making of laws for their country, or whether they are merely "half-timers" or "quarter-timers." I have been trying for thirty years to secure legislative recognition of the principle of the referendum, initiative, and the recall. I have lived to see the principle adopted by the strongest fighting party in Australia, by the Australian Natives Association, and also by the Nationalist party, although they keep the fact in the background. I want to see this Parliament dominated by that principle, which it has unanimously affirmed. If the Country party follows the example of the great Country party of the United States of America, it will also adopt the principle, and with all parties in the House in favour of it it should speedily receive legislative sanction. Every honorable member, when he goes before his constituents, says, "I shall esteem it the greatest honour to be returned as your representative—to act as your servant"—but how many men on being elected to this House or to another place turn a somersault, and vote as crookedly as they please. We have at all times wondered why men vote in a certain way. I think I can make a claim which cannot be made by any other parliamentary representative under the British flag; it is that I am the only member whose constituents are at liberty to remove me from my position at any moment. I glory in the fact that I had the courage to give them that power, and to leave it with them for thirty years. I would not stay here for a moment if I did not feel I represented a

majority of my constituents. The referendum, initiative, and recall have cleansed away the so-called "graft" of the United States of America. Over 340 communities in America have adopted the reform, and their cities are ruled by Commissioners subject to the recall. Every State east of a dividing line of the United States of America has it in some shape or form, and, with the exception of five of the older states on the eastern side it is to be found in operation.

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—What is the chief advantage?

Dr. MALONEY.—The elimination of fraud, corruption, and bribery. With the referendum, the initiative, and the recall it would be impossible to lose 5,000,000 bushels of wheat, most of which was stolen, though nobody was arrested. Imagine a quantity of wheat sufficient to fill lorry after lorry from the Melbourne post-office to the Sydney post-office, and a little further on towards Newcastle, and then imagine that to be lost, and most of it stolen without anybody being punished. It is a bad state of affairs when a person who wishes to pay for flour in Melbourne or Sydney has to pay even more than the price at which it is sold to our enemies. Such conditions could not possibly prevail if the people generally had a real voice in the management of their own affairs, but this highly necessary reform is not realized, though there is not a member here but declares that majorities must rule. I came prepared to speak on another matter, but, owing to the tricky action of a man, whom I love and venerate in spite of his faults, I was thwarted. I can assure that honorable member, however, that I shall use the forms of the House to "get level." I hope that shortly we shall have simpler rules of debate, and, above all, that the people who pay our salaries, and those of every public official, will have some say in the management of public affairs. I object to the increases in Public Service salaries that were made during the recess, for such increases ought to have the indorsement of Parliament. A man who rests in the sunshine of a Minister rises rapidly over men equal and even superior in ability, and of far greater experience.

One man is receiving £2,000, and another £1,500 per annum, they having been passed over the heads of men infinitely better than they. I do not know what the public servants of Australia are doing to tolerate this sort of thing. I feel certain that there is no Minister of experience who has ever witnessed such happenings in the past. However, I can do no more than protest, and say that if the press would only let the public know half of the "fool game" here, there would be a change; and I hope to live to see such a change made. No matter what party occupies the Ministerial benches we shall never have proper government until the public have the controlling power. It is much to be regretted that with two parties who believe in the referendum, initiative, and recall, a measure is not introduced to carry the reform into effect, for I feel sure it would be carried by a large majority. It is also to be regretted that, simply because the head of the Government is going to England, this Chamber should be forbidden by a majority to proceed with measures of importance to the public generally.

Mr. BAMFORD (Herbert) [4.50].—I regret very much to have to address myself to a personal matter in which the honorable member for Melbourne (Dr. Maloney) and myself are mutually interested, and to explain my reasons for differing from that gentleman. I told the honorable member the matter was deferred; but how did I know the honorable member was going to speak? He had no right to refer to me as he did, and I resent his saying that there was a trick on my part. Those who know me best know that I am the last man in this House to perpetrate a trick on anybody.

Dr. MALONEY.—So I thought, and so I think; but the honorable member got the best of me.

Mr. BAMFORD.—The honorable member can make a personal explanation, or speak on the adjournment of the House. The matter to which I desire to address myself is the dismissal of Lieut-Colonel Walker, the War Service Homes Commissioner. I have here a document which was circulated among honorable members yesterday, containing a

statement by the Acting Minister for Repatriation (Mr. Rodgers) of the reasons for declaring the appointment of Lieut-Colonel Walker to be null and void. I do not intend to read that document, but those who do so will find that there is no charge against Lieut-Colonel Walker, the only reason given for his dismissal being that of his insolvency. This reason is only justified on a technicality—by a strict interpretation of the Act under which the Commissioner was appointed. As has been already explained, Lieut-Colonel Walker's insolvency was annulled by the Court in Queensland, where the insolvency took place, and the Judge, in sympathetic terms, said that he had been somewhat badly treated. The circumstances of the case were explained the other day. I pressed the Acting Minister for Repatriation to say whether or not there was any other reason but the insolvency of Lieut-Colonel Walker for his dismissal; and the document I have in my hand is an admission by the Minister that there is no other reason but the insolvency. It was in the matter of Mr. Caldwell that the honorable member for Melbourne made some remarks a short time ago. I have here the report of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts, which went specially into the case of Lieut-Colonel Walker and Mr. Caldwell, and the proposed purchase of timber rights in the South Sea Islands. It is a somewhat exhaustive report, and I do not intend to read it; but it completely exonerates Lieut-Colonel Walker of anything of a questionable character. I should like to read just one paragraph, which refers to the £5 paid, or supposed to have been paid, to bind the bargain, as it were, between Lieut-Colonel Walker, as Commissioner, and Mr. Caldwell.—

On the 1st October, 1920, the War Service Homes Commissioner addressed the following letter to Mr. Caldwell:—

"In view of the misrepresentation by you of your rights regarding the leasing of the Pacific islands of Vanikoro and Tevai, I hereby demand the return of the sum of £5, which was paid to you by me on behalf of this Commission for an option to purchase your alleged interests in the said islands, which interests have since been proved to be bogus. Further, you are advised that, should you fail to repay the said sum of £5 to me on or before the 21st instant, such legal action as the circumstances warrant will be lodged against you without further warning."

And this is what the Public Accounts Committee say in regard to that—

It subsequently transpired that the payment to Mr. Caldwell of the sum of £5 had not been made. The peremptory threat to institute legal proceedings against him appears to have been an ill-chosen and belated attempt to vindicate the Commission.

I am credibly informed that it was not at the instance of Lieut.-Colonel Walker that this demand for the return of the £5 was made, but that it was made by the solicitor acting for the Commissioner—that Lieut.-Colonel Walker was not responsible in any way.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Was the demand sent without direction?

Mr. BAMFORD.—Apparently. As to the allegations of perjury, the report of the Public Accounts Committee completely exonerates Lieut.-Colonel Walker—exonerates him from anything in the nature of shady transactions. There is nothing in the report that, even by inference, could justify any one in saying that Lieut.-Colonel Walker has done anything improper. The report indicates, and the evidence shows, that Mr. Caldwell agreed to sell to the Commissioner a lease which Mr. Caldwell had not, and never had, in his possession. The honorable member for Melbourne, speaking the other day, said—

To produce a document which is absolutely forged, in order to ruin another Australian, is infamous. I know that the soldiers have not been treated as well as, perhaps, honorable members would desire. Any man put into a position such as that occupied by Colonel Walker ought to be of a character absolutely above reproach—

Where is the reproach against Lieut.-Colonel Walker's character? Is it the fact of his insolvency?

Dr. MALONEY.—No, that is not it, and you ought to know it.

Mr. BAMFORD.—The honorable member went on—

but the streets of Melbourne actually shriek at his name.

Is that correct? It is absolutely incorrect. Where is Lieut.-Colonel Walker's name mentioned in any way discreditable to that gentleman?

Dr. MALONEY.—Ask Captain Burkett.

Mr. BAMFORD.—Is Captain Burkett “the streets of Melbourne”?

Dr. MALONEY.—It was in the streets of Melbourne, particularly Russell-street.

Mr. BAMFORD.—Then the shrieks must have been *sotto voce*.

Dr. MALONEY.—How many hundreds of pounds settled the matter?

Mr. BAMFORD.—The honorable member is now, by inference, making another accusation. At page 7385 of our *Hansard* report, he is reported to have made this statement—

It is, therefore, certain that Lieut.-Colonel Walker, either deliberately or recklessly committed perjury, and the object was, as stated formally by me, to injure Mr. Caldwell.

That statement was made on the authority of a letter written to the Attorney-General by Mr. Woolf, a private letter, so to speak. The Attorney-General did not circulate it, but it became public property by the action of the honorable member in referring to it in this chamber.

Dr. MALONEY.—It had been circulated before that. I was not the only one who saw it.

Mr. BAMFORD.—I have not seen it, and I should like to know who else saw it. Now it is in *Hansard*.

Dr. MALONEY.—Only part of it is in *Hansard*. I can let you see the whole of it.

Mr. BAMFORD.—The honorable member, very illogically, added—

If Lieut.-Colonel Walker is content to pocket the statement made in the letter which I read in the House, that he is guilty of wilful perjury, I have nothing more to say.

Colonel Walker is making every endeavour to get the statement made outside the House, so that he may take steps to vindicate himself. He can do that only if the honorable member will waive his parliamentary privilege, or repeat his statement outside. This is a copy of the letter which was sent to the honorable member on his behalf—

On Thursday last, in the House of Representatives, you made statements reflecting upon the character of our client, Lieut.-Colonel Walker, that are as libellous, if not protected by privilege, as they are untrue. Amongst other things you said of him, “To produce a document which is absolutely forged in order to ruin another Australian is infamous,” and you make other equally serious imputations.

On behalf of our client we challenge you to repeat these statements under circumstances freed from privilege, and we will give you plenty of opportunity to prove them. If you have not recklessly abused your position and privileges as a member of Parliament, you will give our client the chance of disproving these things, or be man enough to withdraw and apologize.

Our client now courts, and always has, the fullest inquiry into his administration.

I ask the honorable member if he will accept the challenge of Lieut.-Colonel Walker, whom I have known for thirty-five years, and against whom, I say, no such infamous charge as that of perjury should be made without an opportunity being given to him to refute it.

Mr. FENTON.—Why does not Lieut.-Colonel Walker tackle the lawyer who made the statement contained in the letter referred to by the honorable member for Melbourne?

Mr. BAMFORD.—The honorable member knows that whoever circulates a libellous statement is as guilty as the person who first made it. Hitherto the honorable member for Melbourne has stood by the under dog.

Dr. MALONEY.—I desire that a man who tried to ruin an Australian should be punished if he committed perjury, as I believe, from the evidence given before the Committee of Public Accounts, Lieut.-Colonel Walker did.

Mr. BAMFORD.—I have a copy of that evidence, and it contains no charge of perjury, or any other crime, against Lieut.-Colonel Walker. If the honorable member is satisfied that Lieut.-Colonel Walker has committed perjury, why does he not give an opportunity for his statement to be proved?

Dr. MALONEY.—Let Lieut.-Colonel Walker sue the man who has accused him. Mr. Woolf accused him to the Attorney-General.

Mr. BAMFORD.—The onus of circulating the charge of perjury is on the honorable member. Hitherto he has always stood for fair play, and for the vindication of those who have been injured. We have often known him to champion some one who has suffered under an injustice or an alleged injustice.

Dr. MALONEY.—Yes, and you have helped me. But you do not want to help a man who is accused of perjury.

Mr. BAMFORD.—I ask the honorable member to say outside what he has said here, or, at least, to waive the parliamentary privilege in respect of those words.

Mr. GABB (Angas) [5.8].—It seems to me that it is the intention of the Government, acting through the Repatriation Commission, to reduce gradually, but surely, the pensions of deserving war sufferers. There are other matters which

I might well ventilate, such as the need for increasing the old-age pension rate, and the reduction of the incidence of the income tax on the smaller incomes, but I shall deal now with two cases in which war pensions have been reduced, with a view to having them recorded in *Hansard*. During my electoral campaign, I said that history repeats itself; that many heroes of the Peninsular War, of Waterloo, of the Crimea, and of the Indian Mutiny were allowed to die in the workhouses of Great Britain, and that the further the recent war drifted behind us, the more it would be proved that our Australian soldiers needed the assistance of the Labour party. Already, there is evidence that our war victims need the help of others than those who profess to be their especial friends.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—They are getting a taste of the administration of the Labour party in New South Wales, where a Labour Government is in power.

Mr. GABB.—I am speaking of South Australian conditions, and leave it to the honorable member to deal with those of his State. No doubt, he knows of many cases of men who are not being justly treated in respect of war pensions. The first case to which I direct attention is that of a man who, after drawing a war pension for practically four years, was told that his ill-health was not due to the war, and he was thereupon deprived of his pension. When he complained of this treatment he received the following official reply:—

I have to advise you that the Repatriation Commission, Melbourne, having considered all the facts of the case, decided that your disability was not due to war service, and cancelled your war Pension, but the Principal Departmental Medical Officer recommends that you apply for an invalid pension, as you are apparently eligible for same.

Surely, if the man's ill-health were not due to the war, he would not have been granted the pension in the first instance. As to the recommendation that he should apply for an invalid pension, there seems to be an attempt to substitute civil pensions for war pensions. I hardly know the object of that, unless it be that only 15s. a week can be paid by way of invalid pension, and that the war pensions are on a more liberal scale. Invalid pensions are given only to those who are incapable of earning their living. If a man who went to the Front, and for four years

drew a war pension, is in such a condition that the Principal Departmental Medical Officer recommends him to try to obtain an invalid pension, the Repatriation Department should see that justice is done to him. Let me read what Gunner Yates, ex-member of this Parliament, a returned man, now secretary to the South Australian Branch of the Labour party, writes of this case:—

I have sent him to the Repatriation Department here, also drafted a letter for him to Merry, all to no purpose, and they refuse him any redress. The man hobbles into my office frequently, and is a total wreck, although he was a strong railway navvy when he enlisted. They have granted him half cash for his gratuity, and on this he is living, and I hope that his pension will be restored to him from the time it ceased, for there is no gratitude to a man to give him something with one hand and then take it from him with the other. I personally ventilated this case at a meeting of the R.S.A., and the man continually haunts the Repatriation Department, only to get worse treatment than Bell spoke of.

Evidently he refers to the honorable member for Darwin.

The second case is a little different, but behind it is the same principle of cutting back the soldiers' pensions, irrespective of whether or not justice is done. The man in this case was for eight months in a tunnelling company in France, and then he became ill. I shall read the ruling that has been given in regard to his pension, because I do not believe that the ex-officers, who are members of this Parliament, will sit back and allow such a ruling to continue. The man did not appeal when his sustenance allowance was cut down, but he did appeal when his pension was reduced from £3 3s. to £1 1s. per fortnight. This is the reply he received from the Department—

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of 1st July regarding the cancellation of living allowance received from this Department, which has been paid up to and including 30th June, 1920, and I have to advise that a ruling has been received from head-quarters of this Department to the effect that the Repatriation Commission has decided that men who enlisted, when advanced in years, and were discharged for pre-existing constitutional diseases, concealed or latent on enlistment, would not be eligible for sustenance, nor can the Department accept any liability in connexion with medical treatment. In view of this decision, your case was subject to review, and, under the circumstances, no further allowance can be granted you by this Department over and above the war pension that you are at present receiving.

Mr. Gabb.

I am perfectly confident that when members of this Parliament appealed for recruits from the platforms throughout the country, they did not say that if recruits were advanced in years, and it was later discovered that they had pre-existing diseases, concealed or latent at the time of enlistment, they would be treated differently from others.

Mr. MCGRATH.—How do the medical officers know that the diseases were pre-existent?

Mr. GABB.—That is what I was about to ask. If the Department is to be allowed to sneak out of its obligations to these men by saying that they had pre-existing constitutional diseases, concealed or latent, a way will be opened for the cancellation of many pensions which soldiers are at present enjoying. If this particular man was able to do tunnelling work in France for eight months the germs of disease must have been very much concealed or latent. Unless honorable members are prepared to see that justice is done to returned soldiers, the hardship which, under the plea of financial stringency is at present being imposed upon the old-age and invalid pensioners, as is admitted by the Treasurer, who says that he cannot find the money to do what should be done, will be extended to the men who did their duty overseas, and as time goes on that injustice will become greater unless we, as a Parliament, do our duty. I hope that honorable members who were officers during the war, and led these men through many a fight, will see that the Government do not hide themselves behind the Repatriation Commission. It would appear as if the main object of the Commission were to prevent members from getting to close quarters, as they did when they were dealing with the Minister, and so enable the Government to cloak the cutting down of the pensions.

Mr. WEST.—The honorable member has great foresight.

Mr. GABB.—I have some foresight; my first name is Moses! At any rate, I have sufficient knowledge of the world to be aware that the great consideration in life is not to heed what the newspapers say, or the opinion of the day or the week or the month, but to look at the verdict of the century. And history, as far back as it can be traced, shows plainly that although when a war is in progress

the soldier is a hero, when the war is over he is a nuisance, and the further the war recedes in time the bigger nuisance he becomes, if he is looking for financial support or consideration from those for whom he has fought. I can see history repeating itself in the cases I have brought before the House. I am not mentioning these matters for any party purpose, because I give honorable members on the Ministerial side credit for having the interests of the returned soldiers at heart as much as I have, and I wish them to assist me in seeing that something effective is done. Apparently because the Prime Minister is departing for England these matters are to be allowed to stand over until next year, but I know that if men had been told before they went to the war what they are being told now they would have said, as many of them are saying to-day, "When there is another war they can have it on their own."

Mr. BAYLEY (Oxley) [5.22].—I desire to bring two cases before the House, because for the last six or nine months I have failed to get any redress from the Departments concerned. The first case is that of Wilfred J. Hodgkinson, late able seaman in the Australian Navy. This young fellow was employed upon H.M.A.S. *Australia* and, during coaling operations in Sydney harbor a hauser snapped, with the result that he was severely injured. He was taken to hospital, where he remained for a considerable time, and his left arm was amputated. The boy's mother came down from Brisbane, and later the Navy Department sought to settle all claims on behalf of the boy for the loss of his arm by the payment of £132. When the mother related the circumstances to me I told her that the boy was injured in the service of his country, as much as if he had lost his arm in the war. The Navy Department was again approached and consented to increase the amount to £198, which the mother was informed was the maximum amount that could be granted under the regulations. That amount was paid to the mother. The War Pensions Act provides that a man who has lost an arm or leg shall receive a pension of 15s. per week, or £39 per annum, so that the amount paid by the Navy Department to this young seaman is equivalent to only a five years' pension for a bene-

ficiary under that Act. I mentioned the matter to the Minister for the Navy (Mr. Laird Smith), who said he was sympathetic, but sympathy does not go very far. I suggested to him that if he found it impossible to give the boy any further financial help he had a moral responsibility to find him employment. The boy was injured in the service of the Navy, and if we are to build up an Australian Navy that will be worthy of the name, we must see that those who are injured in the service of their country are adequately cared for. I claim that a paltry payment of £198 is totally inadequate compensation for the loss of an arm by a boy 18 years of age who has practically the whole of his working life before him.

Mr. MCGRATH.—Has not the Department found a job for him?

Mr. BAYLEY.—No. The Navy Department tried to evade all responsibility and advised the boy to apply to the Repatriation Department for employment. For months he has haunted the offices of the Repatriation Department in Brisbane, but up to the present time no employment has been found for him. His people are doing for him what they can. At present he is attending college in the endeavour to fit himself for a clerical position. In the meantime the Navy Department is sitting back and doing nothing. The departmental conscience has been salved by the payment of a paltry sum of £198, and now the authorities refuse to do anything further for the boy. I mention this case to-day because I know that every honorable member will agree that the treatment I have described is not such as should be meted out to any member of the Australian Navy. I hope that, even at this late hour, the Minister will, if necessary, annul the regulation in order that something further may be done for a boy who, when he lost his arm, was as much in the service of his country as he would have been had he been engaged in warlike operations when he sustained the injury.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—It is the Department's duty to find work for him.

Mr. BAYLEY.—That is my contention. The monetary compensation will serve him until a position is found for him. The Government might follow the

example of the State Railway Department. Down at the dock we see a one-armed man acting as gateman. Even private employers accept responsibility for injured employees, but a great institution like the Navy Department shelters itself behind a regulation, and does practically nothing.

The other case is that of D. W. Jones, a returned soldier. Upon his return from active service he was adjudged worthy of a pension, but at the end of six months he had to submit himself for re-examination. The Medical Board pronounced him physically fit, and accordingly his pension was cancelled. But he was a Federal public servant, and when he submitted himself to the departmental medical officer he was pronounced physically unfit for re-employment. On the one hand he is denied a pension because he was pronounced physically fit, and on the other hand he is refused re-employment because he is said to be physically incapable of carrying out clerical duties. The records show that ever since his return from the war he has never been absent from duty except when he was ill for a number of days during the influenza epidemic. This man has applied to the Department over and over again, without success. He rightly claims either the pension or the right to work. He asks for no favours. If he is not entitled to the one he is fully entitled to the other.

Mr. POYNTON.—In what Department is he employed?

Mr. BAYLEY.—He was employed in the Postmaster-General's Department, Brisbane. His case has been brought under the notice of the Minister concerned, and of the Public Service Commissioner. A few weeks ago, he was notified that in twelve months' time he would have to submit to a medical examination, and that if it was then found that he was in a fit condition he would be re-appointed to his position. Pending that examination, he has been appointed temporarily in the Records Branch of the Postmaster-General's Department, Brisbane. The young fellow is either fit or unfit. If he is physically unfit to do his work, he should be given the pension. If he is physically fit, he should be debarred from the pension, and a position found for him such as he is entitled to.

Mr. MAKIN (Hindmarsh) [5.33].—I desire to voice my feelings regarding various anomalies which exist in respect of old-age and invalid pensions; but I recognise that, in view of a notice of motion appearing on the business-paper of the House—to which, sir, you have already drawn attention—it will not be competent for me now to deal with one specific phase which has my heartiest sympathy, namely, the matter of increasing the pension rate. Apart from that, I desire to point to certain directions in which pensioners could be relieved. The provisions of the Act are so hedged with technicalities that many people are subject to injustice because the administrating authority has not adequate discretionary powers. I have already brought one certain matter before this House; and, since the pensioner concerned has not received the consideration to which he is entitled, I have no hesitation in again stating his case. The circumstances have to do with a young man who is suffering from tubercular complaint. For the reason that he is living at home with his parents, and that the father is earning more than £1 per week, the young pensioner—although he has reached the age of manhood—is not permitted to benefit by the provision for an invalid pension. If he were to remove to some other residence, the pension would be given him; but, because he remains in his father's home, where he can receive the best of treatment and sympathetic consideration, both he and his parents are penalized. This anomaly should be removed. I wish to refer to one other matter, which I have previously spoken upon in this Chamber, and that is with respect to giving pensioners the right to earn more than they may do without having their pensions reduced. At present, the earning capacity of an old-age pensioner is limited to the same amount as that which was decided upon when the purchasing power of money was far greater than to-day, and when economic difficulties were not so pronounced. Would it not be possible for the Treasurer to relieve the hard lot of our aged and infirm by permitting a higher margin of earning capacity without reduction of pension? There are many widows who receive pensions, and who, as they get older and feeble, find that they cannot continue to maintain their own homes.

They go to live with relatives. Why should they not be permitted to enjoy the full amount of the rental which they might secure from their old home? Why should there be any reduction in pension? It is manifestly unfair. I hope the Government will amend the Act so that wider discretionary powers may be given to the Department administering pensions to afford relief in the directions which I have indicated. There is also the urgent claim of blind pensioners. They should be permitted to have their full pensions as a right, and should not be penalized by the fact of their being able to assist themselves by working.

When the sum of £156 was fixed as the amount of deduction permissible in connexion with the income tax, the value of money was far different from the value to-day. Since 1915, there have been huge increases in the cost of living, namely, that what could be purchased in 1911 for £1, in 1915 required 25s. 4d., and in 1920, 35s. 8d. I do not consider that the amount of £156 exemption was adequate even six years ago; it should have been £200, at least. But it cannot be logically claimed that in 1921 an exemption of £156 is fair. The Government will be lacking in their duty if they do not take steps to relieve the position of thousands of people who are compelled to deduct, from their already inadequate earnings, a sum by way of income tax. Those who are barely receiving a living wage fail to secure exemption. Even if they had not to pay any taxes, their earnings would not provide a reasonable standard of comfort; they merely receive a wage of existence. People have come to me in despair because of the demands of the Income Tax Department, when they cannot make both ends meet. The mothers are those who suffer the most heavily; the money coming into their homes is not sufficient to feed and clothe their families. The exemption should be increased in order to afford urgent relief. There is also this further factor, that even where the exemption is applicable, it fails to afford relief. In the case of many people, there is actually no exemption. Probably, the persons who are so favorably situated in the matter of income that the exemption disappears in their case may be regarded as being well able to afford the amount of the tax imposed

upon them, but my claim is for those persons who are on the bread line. Not receiving an adequate remuneration for the services they are rendering to the community, their homes suffer and their wives and children are obliged to go without clothing, and often without food, in order to provide the amount of income tax they are called upon to pay. It is not equitable. Those who are best able to afford the tax should be called upon to pay it, and those who are subject to difficulties or are in unfortunate circumstances should be relieved of the tax as much as possible. Therefore, I ask the Government to give consideration to this matter at the earliest possible moment. It demands earnest consideration from those honorable members who profess to have the welfare of the community at heart.

I object to this Parliament going into recess while there is still work to be done. There are many pressing problems of a most difficult character confronting Australia, the solution of which demands that we should remain here. The Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) has told us that the only business likely to be considered this session is the Tariff, and he uttered a cheap sneer at the expense of honorable members on this side who desire to work, by saying that we are "blacklegs" on our class. I have come into this House with the idea of rendering faithful service to the people who have sent me here. I desire a solution of the many difficult and complex problems that confront the people I represent, and we cannot arrive at that solution by adjourning the House. Such questions as the basic wage, the pensions of tubercular soldiers, a readjustment of the invalid and old-age pension rates, the Public Service superannuation, and other urgent matters call for legislation; and if nothing is done in these directions this year, they cannot be considered until the middle of next year. I protest against the House going into recess while there are many duties which we could usefully perform for the citizens of Australia remaining to be done. It is our duty to remain here and clean the business-sheet before we go into any recess and take the holiday which some members of the Ministry seem to think desirable.

There has been a gross betrayal by the Prime Minister and the Government in respect to the payment of the basic wage.

In October, 1919, the Prime Minister promised an inquiry by a Royal Commission into the amount of wage that would afford to those engaged in industry in Australia a reasonable standard of comfort. That inquiry was duly made, and, as a result, the Commission presented the recommendation that £5 16s. per week was a fair and reasonable wage for a man, his wife, and three children. But immediately that report was submitted, the Prime Minister, in an endeavour to side-track it, called upon the Chairman of the Commission (Mr. Piddington) to prepare a memorandum showing how the basic wage might be paid, and whether industry could afford to pay it. That memorandum was, I understand, hurriedly prepared by Mr Piddington, but there are features of it which are certainly open to contention. Mr. Piddington was prepared to base his figures upon an amount at the point of wholesale price instead of at the point of retail consumption, but he included a great army of workers he had no right to include, seeing that he had taken the wholesale price as the basis of his calculations. The value of Australian manufactures in 1913 was £161,560,000, whereas the wages paid during the same period amounted to £33,606,000. That is to say, for every £100 worth of goods £20 16s. was paid in wages. In 1918 the value of the output of manufactures had increased to £298,000,000, while the wages paid during the same period had only increased to £38,300,000. There was a comparative reduction in the amount of wages paid to the extent of £4 per £100 worth of goods manufactured. Instead of deriving an advantage the workers of Australia have during recent years suffered an actual reduction per £100 in the value of manufactures. This is a fact that should not be overlooked by the occupants of the Treasury bench. They promised to institute this inquiry and apply the finding of the Commission to the workers of the Commonwealth, and it is their bounden duty to see that that is done. I find that the £298,000,000, which represents the value of production in 1918, represents the value at wholesale rates of the six principal items of production only, and that the wage of £5 16s. is based on retail prices. As a matter

of fact, the ability of the community to pay should be estimated at the point of consumption and not at the point of wholesale prices as taken by Mr. Piddington.

Mr. FENTON.—And Mr. Knibbs.

Mr. MAKIN.—Of course, Mr. Knibbs also. It is most important to note that the value of production for 1918 was the lowest since 1914, that since then 200,000 men have returned from the Front and re-entered industries, and that as wholesale prices have increased by 37 per cent. between 1918 and the 30th June, 1920, the value of the £298,000,000 would consequently have been £409,000,000 at the 30th June, 1920. If Mr. Piddington had based his figures on this calculation, his finding as set out in the memorandum to the Prime Minister would have been materially altered. In respect to the fixing of a basic wage and the ability of industries to pay it, it is a fair request that we should take our figures at the point of retail consumption instead of basing them on the values at the point of production or wholesale prices. In any case, opportunity ought to be given to the House to discuss the basic wage question fully before it rises, because we have a duty to perform to the people of Australia, who are suffering under the disability of not securing a wage that affords them a reasonable standard of comfort. What a great indictment it is upon this country to admit that its industries cannot pay a wage which will give that reasonable standard! I am desirous of fostering these industries, but unless they are prepared to give a fair return to the wealth producers I shall be reluctant to afford them that measure of Tariff Protection they request. On the 30th October, 1919, the Prime Minister said that in order to secure industrial peace we must be prepared to pay the price, which, he said, was justice to the workers. Nothing less would serve, he said. Therefore, it is now due to us to do that justice by stipulating that effect shall be given to the finding of the Basic Wage Commission. This afternoon the honorable member for Darling (Mr. Blakeley) asked the Prime Minister whe-

ther he would call the Royal Commission together again and give it an opportunity of considering Mr. Piddington's further memorandum. It was a very reasonable request that the Commission which had gone so thoroughly into all the details should be given the opportunity either of indorsing that memorandum or of declaring it to be a statement of the position that did not fairly demonstrate whether the basic wage of £5 16s. could or could not be paid by the industries of Australia. There is not, in the minds of the Prime Minister and his supporters, any desire to meet the position fairly and squarely. The right honorable gentleman, as reported in *Hansard*, stated last year—

'One thing I do reject absolutely, and without reservation. I reject, because of its impossibility, any proposal to pay £5 16s. I reject it because it will bring ruin to the country, and ruin to every man that it is intended to benefit.'

Recognising the difficulties in the shape of the high prices of necessities, with which the workers of Australia are contending, we should take steps at once to secure to them a wage that will insure them a reasonable standard of comfort. The industries in which they are employed, and whose wealth they produce, should pay them a wage that will give them ample opportunity to enjoy those privileges which are a fitting reward of citizenship of the Commonwealth. Our natural resources and the great potentialities of this country are such as would allow for a basic wage of, not merely £5 16s. a week, but infinitely more, provided that we had a more equitable form of wealth distribution. I find that 82 per cent of the people of Australia secure only 15 per cent. of the wealth of the country; the remaining 18 per cent. have, in their possession, 85 per cent. of it. While that state of affairs exists I shall not cease to protest against it. It is a most inequitable distribution of wealth, and I shall avail myself of every opportunity as a member of this Parliament to stress the fact that those who are rendering faithful service to the community are not receiving their just due. It is a reflection on the industries of the Commonwealth to say that they are unable to pay such a wage as will allow of a reasonable standard of comfort being enjoyed by the workers.

Sir JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta-Treasurer) [6.5].—I move—

That the debate be now adjourned.

May I say that I do not want to deprive my honorable friends opposite of any time, and that I shall be quite prepared to give them, next Thursday, the equivalent of the time they will lose by the adjournment of the debate at this stage.

Question—That the debate be now adjourned—put. The House divided.

Ayes	43
Noes	22

Majority	21
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AYES.

Atkinson, L.	Hill, W. C.
Bamford, F. W.	Hughes, W. M.
Bayley, J. G.	Jackson, D. S.
Bell, G. J.	Jowett, E.
Best, Sir Robert	Lamond, Hector
Blundell, R. P.	Lister, J. H.
Bowden, E. K.	Livingston, J.
Cameron, D. C.	Mackay, G. H.
Chanter, J. M.	Marks, W. M.
Chapman, Austin	Marr, C. W. C.
Cook, Sir Joseph	Maxwell, G. A.
Corser, E. B. C.	Page, Dr. Earle
Foley, G.	Poynton, A.
Foster, Richard	Prowse, J. H.
Fowler, J. M.	Rodgers, A. S.
Francis, F. H.	Ryrie, Sir Granville
Gibson, W. G.	Stewart, P. G.
Greene, W. M.	Wienholt, A.
Gregory, H.	Wise, G. H.
Groom, L. E.	Tellers:
Hay, A.	Burchell, R. J.
Higgs, W. G.	Story, W. H.

NOES.

Anstey, F.	Mathews, J.
Blakeley, A.	McGrath, D. C.
Brennan, F.	Moloney, Parker
Considine, M. P.	Nicholls, S. R.
Cunningham, L. L.	Riley, E.
Fenton, J. E.	Ryan, T. J.
Gabb, J. M.	Watkins, D.
Lavelle, T. J.	West, J. E.
Lazzarini, H. P.	Tellers:
Mahony, W. G.	Catts, J. H.
Makin, N. J. O.	Page, James
Maloney, Dr.	

PAIRS.

Bruce, S. M.	McDonald, C.
Smith, Laird	Charlton, M.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.
Debate adjourned.

IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

Debate resumed from 20th April (*vide* page 7548), on motion by Mr. HUGHES—

That the paper—League of Nations—Mandate for German Possessions in the Pacific Ocean situated south of the Equator, other than German Samoa and Nauru—be printed.

Mr. HIGGS (Capricornia) [6.11].—It was somewhat unfortunate that I had to address myself to this question last evening at the end of the political crisis—

Mr. BRENNAN.—At the end of a perfect day.

Mr. HIGGS.—At the end of a perfect day in so far as the prospect of a general election before its due time was concerned. When the debate was adjourned last night, I was referring to the desire of Great Britain and Japan to renew the Anglo-Japanese Treaty in a form that would be acceptable to the League of Nations. I took the view that it was impossible that an Anglo-Japanese Treaty, such as would be acceptable to the League of Nations, would be unacceptable to the United States of America. I find that the general Arbitration Treaty, which was signed on 3rd August, 1911, was, as the honorable member for Barrier (Mr. Considine) interjected last night, not ratified by the Senate.

Mr. RYAN.—So that clause 4 is not a saving clause.

Mr. HIGGS.—I would not say that clause 4 of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement is not a saving one, since the Senate of the United States of America did ratify an arbitration agreement with Great Britain.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—But not a general arbitration agreement.

Mr. HIGGS.—It ratified, in 1918, the renewal for a period of five years of an arbitration agreement between Great Britain and the United States of America, which was signed on 4th April, 1908.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—With what exemptions?

Mr. HIGGS.—I freely admit that there were a considerable number of exemptions. I am sure honorable members will not argue that because of certain exceptions to the Treaty of 4th April, 1908, which has been renewed for five years as from 1918, there is any likelihood of the United States of America ever going to war with Great Britain.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—I think there is a big probability of that very shortly.

Mr. RYAN.—The question is whether it will be obligatory on Britain to go to war against the United States of America in support of Japan.

Mr. HIGGS.—According to clause 4 of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty it is provided that either party entering into

a general arbitration agreement with another power is not called upon to go to war with that power.

Mr. RYAN.—There is no general arbitration agreement.

Mr. HIGGS.—To all intents and purposes the agreement of 1918 is a general arbitration agreement between Great Britain and the United States of America. The honorable member for Barrier (Mr. Considine) believes that the United States of America will be at war with Great Britain in a very short time, but I think there are very few people in Australia who agree with him.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—It is dead certain that Australia will not go to war with America!

Mr. HIGGS.—There is just as much good feeling between the people of Australia and the people of the United States of America as there is between Britons and Americans. I was saying that, in my opinion, the League of Nations ought to be supported by all honorable members; and I hope the time is not far distant when the maintenance of the League will find a place on the platform of every political party in Australia. I suggest to my former friends of the Official Labour party that they should, at the earliest opportunity, place on their platform the plank, “Maintenance of the League of Nations.”

Mr. CONSIDINE.—I hope the Labour party will not be so silly!

Mr. HIGGS.—If there is any hope in the world for the ideals aimed at by the sane and moderate men of the Official Labour party it is in the League of Nations. I regard the League as a means whereby the necessity for a huge Imperial naval expenditure may at least be reduced, if not avoided altogether.

I have no wish whatever to weaken the ties of kinship between Great Britain and Australia. I am so anxious that those ties should be strengthened that I am prepared to vote for the appointment to London of a resident Minister from the Commonwealth. I hope there will be an Imperial Board, Committee, or Council, whatever it may be called, of resident Ministers in London representing the Dominions and Great Britain, the resident Ministers to also occupy the position of delegates to the League of Nations. It is extremely necessary that we should appoint a representative to the League. Honorable members will have observed

that the Treasurer (Sir Joseph Cook) said the other day that our contribution to the League is about £44,000 per annum.

Mr. RYAN.—It is too much!

Mr. HIGGS.—It is a large sum, for the reason that we demand the same voting power as any other State. I am quite in accord with Senator Millen's proposal that there should be some more equitable distribution of the expenses of the League. Those expenses, I think, ought to be borne more on a *per capita* basis, so that the larger nations may pay their due share, and not expect a small State, with a population of 5,000,000, to pay as large a sum as they. If some honorable members take exception to the contribution of £44,000 as being too large, how does that sum compare with the millions of money we shall have to spend on military and naval defence if the League of Nations does not turn out a success.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—If the League of Nations is effective, it would be a small sum for us to pay.

Mr. HIGGS.—The object of all should be to make the League a success. I believe Imperial Federation to be quite impracticable. I cannot imagine that the Commonwealth would agree to surrender any of its powers in the making of laws for the peace and good order of the Commonwealth to an Imperial Parliament sitting, say, in London, thousands of miles away.

I come now to a most important part of the Prime Minister's speech, in which he said—

Quite recently a statement was made by the British Government of most portentous character, so far as Australia is concerned. It was that Britain was no longer able to maintain the Navy at the strength necessary for the complete protection of the Empire, and the Dominions must do their share. . . .

We are confronted with a position grave in the extreme. What are we to do? What is our policy to be? We depend for our very existence on the maintenance of the control of the sea by Britain. Britain says she can no longer afford to maintain the Navy at its relative pre-war strength, and calls upon the Dominions to consider the question, and presumably to contribute their share.

I shall be glad to hear what the Prime Minister has in his mind. Is it a contribution in money, in kind, or in men? The late Lord Forrest, when the matter

was discussed many years ago, said he thought we ought to contribute £5,000,000 per annum to the expenses of the British Navy. This question of a contribution is a most delicate matter, on a par with a discussion between father and son as to the future upkeep of a home. I am not prepared to say offhand what our contribution should be. We ought to bear our due share in the defence of the Empire. The right honorable the Prime Minister will, of course, advocate that; but I certainly feel that the Imperial Conference should have brought to its knowledge what the public debt of Australia is—what our obligations are. The States of Australia, on the 30th June, 1919, according to the Budget papers presented by the Treasurer, in September last, owed £400,576,535, while the public debt of the Commonwealth was £381,415,316. Since then we have been borrowing more money, and I imagine that at the present time, in round figures, the public debt of Australia, State and Federal, is in the region of £800,000,000. We are still borrowing to pay our way; that is to say, we do not collect enough money in the way of revenue to pay our debts, and we continue, and we shall have to continue for some time, to borrow.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Not to pay annual expenditure, but to pay loans.

Mr. HIGGS.—We shall have to borrow to pay our annual expenditure, and to meet our war obligations, and every £20,000,000 borrowed necessitates our being prepared to pay at least £1,000,000 annually interest for a number of years.

In the Estimates of receipts and expenditure for the year ending 30th June, 1921, there is a comparison of the Estimates of 1920-21 with the actual revenue and expenditure of 1919-20. From that we learn, under the heading of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, that the estimated receipts for this year are:—

Balance brought forward from previous year for payment of invalid and old-age pensions and war pensions	£5,747,423
Ordinary receipts	£62,453,450

Repayment by the States of interest on loans raised by the Commonwealth for the States	911,250
Total revenue ..	£63,364,700
That does not include certain war services, which are to be paid out of loans.	
On the expenditure side—	
Ordinary services ..	£21,183,895
Additions, new works and buildings ..	3,070,502
War services—	
Total estimate, 1920-21 ..	£62,241,931
Less amount to be paid from loan ..	25,400,000
Total actual, 1919-20 ..	£70,191,322
Less amount paid from loan ..	45,439,414
Payment to States, including special payment of £90,000 to State of Tasmania ..	6,865,000
Interest—States Loan Acts—recoverable from the States ..	911,250
Total expenditure ..	£68,872,578
Balance carried forward for payment of invalid and old-age pensions and war pensions ..	239,545
	£69,112,123

But there are war services to be paid out of loan funds, and the money will be raised in this way—

War Services—

Loans raised and to be raised—	
Not including war savings certificates ..	£25,000,000
War savings certificates ..	400,000
	£25,400,000
Works Purposes—	
Loan raised and to be raised ..	£4,368,444

Northern Territory Loans—

Loans to be raised ..	£223,814
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If we add the expenditure out of our ordinary receipts, the money to be raised for war services, and the money to be raised for works, we get the following:

Expenditure out of ordinary receipts ..	£69,112,123
Loan raised and to be raised for war services ..	25,400,000
Loans raised and to be raised for works ..	4,368,444
	£98,880,577

Mr. Higgs.

Although this is a peace year we are spending only about £5,000,000 less than we spent last year.

Sir JOSEPH COOK. — It is costing as much to repatriate the soldiers as it did to send them to fight.

Mr. HIGGS.—Yes, and our war obligations will continue for some time.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 8 p.m.

Mr. HIGGS.—Fortunately, this year, we have not had to borrow more than £25,000,000, whereas last year we borrowed £45,000,000. But the Treasurer will agree with me that he cannot expect in future years such an abounding revenue as he expects to receive this year. I doubt if the Customs and Excise receipts will continue at the large sum of £26,000,000.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—They will exceed that sum this year; but next year they will be much less.

Mr. HIGGS.—Nor can he expect the income taxation to give as much revenue, because, owing to the fall in prices, the pastoralists and others who now contribute a large part of that revenue will not receive such large incomes, and will be called on to pay very much less. I consider we have about reached the limit of income taxation.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Income tax this year will be paid on a gross return of £15,000,000 for our wool, whereas we have been getting £50,000,000 for it.

Mr. HIGGS.—The question how much, and in what manner, we should contribute to the defence of the British Empire is a delicate one; and, as I have said, I approach it with much diffidence. I am inclined to think that we are better able to afford to train men for service with the Navy, should the need for that service unfortunately arise, than to contribute largely to its maintenance. Should we offer to train a volunteer force of, say, 10,000 men to man the war-ships in case of need?

I hope that I shall not be misunderstood when I say that it is difficult to assess at a money value the work that is being done by the Australian people for the maintenance of the British Empire. For example, what money value can be put on the sacrifices that have been made by our explorers such as Hume, Cunningham, Sturt, Oxley, Mitchell, Leichardt, Kennedy, Stuart, Burke, and Wills, and many others, or of

the pioneer squatters, miners, and bushmen who have followed in their tracks. Scores of men perished in the early days of this country's development. We cannot determine the money value of the developmental work done in this country. I believe that there is nothing comparable in the United Kingdom to the hardships that are being endured by families isolated in the Australian bush. In Queensland, itinerant teachers go from house to house, at one home setting the lessons for the following month before proceeding on their lonely journey to some other family, many miles distant. It is a common thing in Queensland to see children, some of them seven and eight years of age, leaving by a goods train at 8 o'clock in the morning to travel 20 miles to a school, from which they return at 9 o'clock at night, having been away all day from their parents, and largely dependent for their safety during the train journey on the kindly offers of the guard of the train, who may not even know their names.

These families are developing this part of the Empire so that it may be a home for the sons and daughters of Britishers, and their efforts and sacrifices must be considered when the question is asked, "What are we doing for the maintenance of the Empire?"

The need of the Empire before the war was a Navy strong enough to maintain the supremacy of our flag on the seas; and, while we should not reduce our naval strength beyond the point of national safety, to use the words of the Covenant of the League of Nations, we should do all we can to bring about a reasonable disarmament of the nations, and thus reduce the expenditure on defence. The right honorable the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes), I know, has not too much faith in the League of Nations, but I plead with him to use his great eloquence, wit, humour, and pathos in an effort to make it a success, so that its aims and objects may be realized, and that the peace of the world may be established, if it is possible for human beings, with all their weaknesses, to remain always at peace.

Mr. WEST.—I do not think that you will do much with the League of Nations until the Versailles Treaty is amended in some way.

Mr. HIGGS.—The Prime Minister has asked whether the war has changed the

hearts of men; and, if so, whether the change is more than skin deep. When one reads the story of the exploration of the ruins of Empires that have passed away, and remembers the present unrest of the world, it seems not unlikely that our civilization may, like those that have preceded it, pass into oblivion. I believe, however, in Progress, and I take the view expressed by Professor Tucker in one of his essays, that the man of the future will be as far removed from us as we are from the savages who preceded us. I hope, therefore, that the League of Nations may become a success, and that our public men of all parties will strive to make it so. The honorable member for East Sydney interjected that the Covenant of the League of Nations will have to be amended, and I suggest to the Prime Minister that his efforts at the Imperial Conference should be directed to ascertaining the objection of the United States to that Covenant. I am sure that the Americans would accept some of its clauses in their entirety. Is it the clause which declares that the League of Nations will preserve the integrity of existing States or the regional understandings that they object to? Whatever be the reason for their objection the statesmen of Great Britain and the Dominions should try to ascertain it, and then endeavour to remove it by an alteration of the Covenant. I am sure that that Covenant might be altered so as to make it acceptable to the American people. Were the United States of America a member of the League of Nations, it would become the success that those who most believe in it wish it to be.

Mr. WEST.—The American people will not join the League of Nations because they do not wish to interfere in the affairs of Europe.

Mr. HIGGS.—The Americans have long desired to keep free from European entanglements; but if they were satisfied that the forty-three States that are members of the League do not wish to erect a sort of super-State which will rob the smaller States of their powers of self-government, they would, I think, join the League.

In conclusion, I wish the right honorable the Prime Minister *bon voyage*. I hope that he may return in the best of health, with fresh laurels gained by new achievements in a career already very remarkable.

Mr. RYAN (West Sydney) [8.12].—I think that every honorable member recognises the importance of the matter that we are discussing. Like those who have preceded me, I realize the need of conducting this debate on a high plane. It is necessary that we should weigh every word, and should, as far as possible, avoid saying anything that may injure this country in its international relations. The subject to be discussed is a delicate one, and I propose to express nothing but friendship for the nations to which I may have to refer. There is no need for hostility, and I am sure we feel no hostility to the Japanese. We have the friendliest feelings towards them. Every State and every people should have an opportunity for the legitimate fulfilment of its aspirations, and enough of the surface of the earth to live upon. While we stand for a White Australia, which is now the recognised policy of the country, we are prepared to allow room—and there is room—for the development of every other race and nation. At the same time, we should avoid suggesting to others how they should put their house in order. It is not within our province to tell the United States of America what should be its attitude to the League of Nations. In conference we may put forward our views, but in a debate of this sort it is out of place—of course, I express only my own views—to suggest that America should have accepted the Covenant of the League of Nations. That was a matter to be decided by the American people themselves. It has been fully discussed before them, and they have come to a decision upon it. It will be quite unnecessary for the Prime Minister to go to London to find out the reasons why the American people rejected the Covenant of the League of Nations, because those reasons have been made known by discussion upon the public platforms in the United States of America. I must confess that many of the points in the Covenant of the League of Nations, to which exception was taken during the discussion in the United States of America, do not commend themselves to my judgment. I think the people of that country were quite justified in desiring to make a reservation on the question of immigration. They desired that that matter should be one for their own decision, and should not be submitted to the arbitrament of the

League of Nations. And I might go through all the various objections taken in the United States of America to the Covenant of the League, and there is no honorable member but would admit that there was reason and sound sense behind the contention of those who opposed the United States of America joining the League, even although we might not agree with them in every particular. However, that is a matter for the people of the United States of America. We must all agree that it is unfortunate that we have not a Covenant of a League of Nations that commends itself to all the great powers of the world. That is something we all desire, and I am so optimistic as to believe that if the matter is approached as it ought to be it will yet be possible to formulate such a Covenant, to which all the great nations of the world will be signatories. But we shall not promote that objective by taking any captious exception, at the present moment, to the attitude taken up by the great United States of America. The most remarkable feature that I have noticed in listening to the debate on this motion is the great change that has taken place in the public utterances in regard to important public questions during the last few years. It was not so long ago that we were told by the Prime Minister that as a result of the war and the Peace Treaty Australia had taken her place amongst the nations of the world. Now we hear the same honorable gentleman belittling this country, for I think that one of the outstanding features of his speech was the manner in which he derided Australia. He said, with regard to the people of Great Britain—

Why shou'd they spend their money to defend us? What do they gain from us? I do not ask what we gain from them, because our gain is obvious.

Later on he said, in reference to the proposed Anglo-Japanese alliance—

Now here is our dilemma—our interest, our safety, lies in the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty.

I do not subscribe to that statement

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I do.

Mr. RYAN.—To be fair to the Prime Minister, I admit that he did not say that we should not be friendly to the United States of America.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—He said that in order to make the alliance complete the three nations must be in it.

Mr. RYAN.—He also said that the Treaty would be made acceptable to the United States of America, "if possible," but if that were not possible the Treaty must be made all the same, provided that there was in it nothing contrary to the principle of a White Australia. Another notable change is that whilst we were told that the late war was fought to end war, to protect the rights of small nations, and to give self-determination to small nations, we know that since then, even within the bounds of our own Empire, there have been struggles for self-determination, and certain conduct on the part of the Government—I do not say on the part of the people—which has drawn very severe criticism from two large parties in Great Britain.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—From a section only.

Mr. RYAN.—I say of large parties. I am showing that there is a remarkable change in many respects from the attitude taken up, and the protestations made, while the great war was in progress. I am not going into any detailed discussion of the matter, because the question with which I am dealing is too wide. We were told, too, by the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) not very long ago that the League of Nations would solve all our future difficulties in regard to international affairs. Now, he seems to throw aside the League of Nations, and the only person on the Ministerial side who appears to be a strong adherent of it is his colleague the Treasurer (Sir Joseph Cook). The Prime Minister has turned from the League of Nations, and relies entirely on the Imperial Conference. He says it is necessary that he should attend that gathering in order that we might make such arrangements within the Empire as would enable us to resist aggression from without. There is not one word in the whole of his speech on the question of disarmament. He did not say that he would make representations that Australia desires steps to be taken to bring about universal disarmament.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—That was the spirit of his contention.

Mr. RYAN.—If that was the spirit of his contention he succeeded in very completely concealing it. This question is too important and vital to our very existence, involving, as it does, our inter-

national relations, and the possibility of our being involved in war, for us to allow the Prime Minister to go from these shores after a mere vague intimation of the lines upon which he proposes to proceed, without placing some reservation on his powers. In my opinion, whatever he does on the other side of the world should be subject to the approval and ratification of the people of Australia.

Mr. MAXWELL.—He has said that.

Mr. RYAN.—He has not said it, and will not say it. What he did say was that any arrangement made with regard to naval expenditure would be subject to the approval of this Parliament, but he has to give that undertaking, because no money can be expended upon naval defence or anything else until this Parliament has approved of the proposal. But the right honorable gentleman has made no such statement with regard to the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. After giving us a vague outline of what he proposes to do, he is to depart from these shores, and what he does on the other side of the world is apparently to be final, and binding, on the people of Australia. It is not even to be submitted to this Parliament for approval.

Mr. ATKINSON.—How are we to get a Treaty?

Mr. RYAN.—I do not suggest that Great Britain has not a right to make whatever Treaty she likes. It is quite within her power to do so, but I am contending that, so far as Australia is involved in the making of any Treaty or incurs responsibility in regard to it, the voice of the people of this country should be heard. I do not propose to ask for anything more.

Mr. MAXWELL.—The Prime Minister stated the conditions upon which he would agree to the Treaty.

Mr. RYAN.—The Prime Minister has given us a vague outline of the lines upon which he proposes to proceed, but I have not sufficient confidence in the judgment of the right honorable gentleman to believe that he can be set up as the sole judge of whether he should adhere to those lines or do what is in the interests of this country.

Mr. MAXWELL.—What does the honorable member suggest that he should do?

Mr. RYAN.—I shall conclude by moving an amendment which, if carried, will have the effect of reserving for the approval of, and ratification by, the people of

this country any commitments which the Prime Minister enters into on behalf of Australia in regard to the renewal of that Treaty.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—How would you ascertain the opinion of the people?

Mr. RYAN.—By a vote of the people. I believe that if the people were left to decide as to whether or not there should be war there would be no war, and I believe, also, that when we are becoming involved in treaties entailing obligations to other countries and international entanglements, it should be left to the people to say whether or not such arrangements should be made.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Does the honorable member mean by referendum or by election?

Mr. RYAN.—I mean by a vote of the people upon a reference to them.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—By referendum?

Mr. RYAN.—The right honorable gentleman does not propose that the matter should come back even for the approval of this Parliament, but it is so serious and important that it should be reserved for approval or rejection by the people.

Mr. STEWART.—That is a very high ideal, but I do not see how we are going to do it.

Mr. RYAN.—It is a high ideal, and it is time that some country gave practical enforcement to high ideals in these matters. Australia has given the lead to the world in other matters, and it may be able to give the lead in this also. I would not hesitate—

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—To suggest a referendum?

Mr. RYAN.—The right honorable gentleman keeps asking me do I suggest a referendum.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Because it seems to be a difficult question to determine in that manner.

Mr. RYAN.—Its importance is such that I do not hesitate to say that I believe the question of the making of a treaty, involving our international relations and implying obligations upon this country, should be submitted to a vote of the people.

I have a few words to say now upon the possibility of constitutional questions

being discussed at the Conference. On the one hand, we have the statement of the Prime Minister that he does not desire any change in our existing constitutional relations with Great Britain. On the other hand, the honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best) and others point out that, in their opinion, there has been a drastic change made in our constitutional relations by reason of the 1917 Conference, and of the fact that Australia has been made a separate party to the covenant of the League of Nations. And, in support of their contention, they point out that the Prime Minister of South Africa and the Prime Minister of Canada have said so in so many words. I agree with those who contend that there has been a change, and that it has been proclaimed by the Prime Ministers of South Africa and Canada. Indeed, the South African Prime Minister actually went to his people with such a proclamation, and asked for their support upon that ground; and he was returned by an overwhelming majority.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—But the honorable member will remember that the issue resolved itself, at the last, into the simple question of in or out of the Empire.

Mr. RYAN.—That interjection would be relevant if I were not just now dealing with a difference of opinion expressed by the right honorable gentleman's colleagues and supporters on that side of the House. There are some honorable members opposite who say that the position is the same as before, and there are also those who state that the situation has been altered. Whatever the position may be, it is due to this House that any documents within the control of the Government, such as that referred to by the honorable member for Kooyong, and, in the course of public correspondence in the press, by Professor Harrison Moore and others, should be laid before this Parliament and the people of the country; because, whether we stand for the change that is supposed to have taken place or for the existing order of things—as the Prime Minister says—or for an Imperial Federation, we can all agree that there should be a full and frank disclosure of everything bearing upon the matter. I hope that the Prime Minister will take an early opportunity to

lay before honorable members any documents or correspondence in his possession in regard to the subject at issue.

Mr. RILEY.—He will do nothing of the kind.

Mr. RYAN.—If the Prime Minister does not, it will be the business of this House to see that he is made to do so. A majority of honorable members can compel the Prime Minister to produce any document they may desire, or they can remove him from office and place some one else there who will do so.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—If they think it wise.

Mr. RYAN.—I remind the honorable member that this request has come not only from honorable members on this side of the House but from his side also, and from honorable members against whom, if I may say so, even he would not make any suggestion of disloyalty.

So much for the constitutional aspect. The other two aspects are concerned in the matter of naval expenditure and in the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I wish the honorable member would first clear up that matter of the referendum. I cannot conceive of a referendum upon a treaty.

Mr. RYAN.—If the Treasurer cannot conceive how a treaty would be submitted by referendum to the people I can hardly hope to enlighten him. The Government have submitted various questions by similar means. They have taken referendums upon proposed alterations to the Constitution, and also concerning conscription. Why, then, cannot they submit to the people the question whether or not we shall incur the responsibilities involved in the renewal of the treaty with Japan? If the Treasurer cannot understand how such a question could be submitted by way of referendum, perhaps he will be able to understand why it is not submitted to Parliament. Why should there be only one man in Australia who has the power to decide? Does the Treasurer think we are all fools? Surely every man and woman has the same right and capacity of forming an opinion as the Prime Minister, or the Treasurer himself; and, surely every man and woman should have an opportunity, after learning the views of all parties involved, and having become acquainted with the discussions at the Imperial Conference, of assisting to decide upon the attitude and conduct of Aus-

tralia in this matter. We may be involved—subject, of course, to the approval of Parliament—in additional naval expenditure. But, for the reason that that has to be referred back to this Parliament, and that the Prime Minister cannot be the final authority in the matter, I do not propose to deal with it at length. There is this to be said, however, that the Prime Minister will wrongly interpret the opinions of the people if he thinks they are likely to agree to any departure from the policy of having an Australian-owned and controlled Navy. We do not want any departure in the nature of a contribution such as was turned down by the people of Australia, I think, in 1910, and, also by the people of Great Britain.

Now I come to the question of the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, and my views as to whether it should be renewed or not may be put in few words: I desire to make it clear that I am only referring to the matter so far as it affects or involves Australia. I do not claim that the action of Great Britain, if she should consider herself well advised in renewing the Treaty, should be subject to the approval of the people of Australia. But I do think that, in so far as it affects us, or involves our people in responsibilities, it should be subject to our review.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—How can we separate a treaty and split it up into little bits? What does the honorable member mean?

Mr. RYAN.—Those are matters which the right honorable gentleman will be able to discuss on a public platform. He, however, is not prepared to trust the people in the matter, but prefers to leave it entirely in the hands of the Prime Minister, so that the right honorable gentleman shall be the sole interpreter, whether he follows out the lines which he has indicated to this House or not. I do not propose to split the Treaty in pieces, but to consult the people on any agreement or understanding on the part of Australia. And why should we be asked to commit ourselves before having had the advantage of learning the nature of the whole discussion upon the subject-matter and of ascertaining whether those are the right lines upon which he should proceed? Moreover, what may be the view of Canada with regard to the Treaty? Are we going to ignore that Dominion, situated as it is upon the

Pacific coastline? And what may be the views of the United States of America and of Great Britain?

Mr. ATKINSON.—Does Canada or New Zealand propose to hold a referendum?

Mr. RYAN.—I do not care what those Dominions propose to do in the matter of taking a referendum. I am now speaking with respect to Australia. We are concerned with Australia, and if the honorable member is not prepared to trust the Australian people, this party, at any rate, is prepared to do so, and desires the people's views to be gauged. There has been a good deal of talk about the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, and concerning the lines on which its proposed renewal should be approached. It will be well to know what the Treaty is. That can only be ascertained by perusing it, and I invite honorable members to do so very carefully. The Treaty has largely to do with interests in India and China, and, unless it is to be extended in some manner, those are the only interests referred to. There are three documents. The first was signed in London on the 30th January, 1902, on behalf of Great Britain and of Japan. The second was signed in London on the 12th August, 1905, and the third was signed, also in London, on 13th July, 1911. The preamble of the last of the three states—

The Government of Great Britain and the Government of Japan, having in view the important changes which have taken place in the situation since the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement of the 12th August, 1905, and believing that a revision of that Agreement responding to such changes would contribute to general stability and repose, have agreed upon the following stipulations to replace the Agreement above mentioned, such stipulations having the same object as the said Agreement, namely:

- (a) The consolidation and maintenance of the general peace in the regions of Eastern Asia and of India.
- (b) The preservation of the common interests of all Powers in China by insuring the independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire and the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in China.
- (c) The maintenance of the territorial rights of the High Contracting Parties in the regions of Eastern Asia and of India and the defence of their special interests in the said regions.

There are set out the whole of the objects. They have to do with India and China

and Eastern Asia. The next important article is Article 2, which reads—

If, by reason of an unprovoked attack or aggressive action wherever arising on the part of any other Power or Powers, either high contracting party should be involved in war in defence of its territorial rights or special interests mentioned in the preamble of this agreement, the other high contracting party will at once come to the assistance of its ally, and will conduct the war in common, and make peace in mutual agreement with it.

There is the obligation that, in the event, say, of Japan being attacked by China in this part of the world, the other contracting party has to come to its assistance at once.

Mr. MAXWELL.—“Unprovoked attack.”

Mr. RYAN.—Was there ever an attack that was not unprovoked in the eye of the party attacked? If Japan is attacked, will it not think the attack is unprovoked? However, there is the obligation to come at once to the assistance of the ally, to wage the war in common, and to make peace in mutual agreement with it; and all these conditions have reference to the three matters mentioned in the preamble. I would like to know how far Australia might be involved, and what we might be expected to do. Might we be involved in conscription in order to send Forces overseas in connexion with the matter? It is quite a possibility.

Another clause to which I wish to refer is clause 4, which reads as follows:—

Should either high contracting party conclude a treaty of general arbitration with a third Power, it is agreed that nothing in this agreement shall entail upon such contracting party an obligation to go to war with the Power with whom such treaty of arbitration is in force.

It has been said that, because that clause is included in the Treaty, we could not be involved in war with the United States.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Does not the honorable member for West Sydney know that the practice hitherto, when Australia consisted of colonies, has been to submit a Treaty before the colony could be bound by it in any way?

Mr. RYAN.—That is all I am asking for now.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—I was speaking of Governments.

Mr. RYAN.—And now the honorable member is asking that full power in this regard should be vested in the Prime

Minister. I want this Parliament to say that there shall be a limitation on the power of the Prime Minister in this respect, and that the people of the country shall have the final say as to whether or not they will accept any commitments upon Australia.

Mr. BOWDEN.—That means a referendum.

Mr. RYAN.—If I had my way I would have a referendum of the people of Australia to decide whether or not any agreement made in regard to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty will be accepted by them. The honorable member seems to be endeavouring to place this construction upon my amendment, in the belief that he will get a certain vote in the House.

Mr. BOWDEN.—I read the amendment, and understood that that was involved in it.

Mr. RYAN.—I believe that in a matter of such tremendous importance, involving the very existence of this country, the people of Australia should have the final say; and I see no difficulty whatever in giving them the opportunity to vote upon the matter. What is the expense? The expense of a referendum upon this question only would be a mere bagatelle compared with the importance of the issue to be decided. An honorable member reminds me, by interjection, that possibly early next year an election will take place of delegates to a Convention which will consider an alteration in the Constitution of Australia. There would be no difficulty in submitting this matter to the people at the same time.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—If Great Britain went to war, what would be the position of Australia if we took a referendum and declared that we would not do so?

Mr. RYAN.—That question is entirely different. We are now invited by Great Britain to come to a Conference with her in order to arrive at a decision as to whether or not there shall be an international commitment: as to whether we shall ally ourselves with Japan, and commit ourselves to go to her assistance in certain circumstances. Surely it is our duty to see that we exhaust every means of arriving at the final opinion of the people of this country upon the matter, casting upon them the responsibility by their vote. In the meantime, a responsi-

bility rests upon us, but we discharge it when we can turn to the people and say, "You are being committed to international obligations in this matter, but we say to it that you were given an opportunity of saying 'Aye' or 'Nay' to the question." I am standing for that.

Mr. BAYLEY.—But the Treaty will be signed long before the Prime Minister returns to Australia.

Mr. RYAN.—There is no need for the Treaty to be signed long before the Prime Minister returns to Australia. The existing Treaty will continue in force until after it is denounced by either party to it. Therefore, the question that there is no time cannot be raised.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—But it may be amended.

Mr. RYAN.—Why should not the people of this country be given a say as to whether it is good that it should be amended?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Other nations will not wait. It is a matter for executive authority.

Mr. RYAN.—I do not care what puny obstacles are placed in the road by my friends opposite. I am sure the people of Australia will not accept them as obstacles.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—That is your opinion.

Mr. RYAN.—It is; but, after all, are we not here to express our opinions, and in a matter of this sort we ought to do so without any feeling, and without being swayed by party considerations. The responsibility is so great that we are not in a position to say, before we have heard every aspect of the question, exactly what should be done in the matter; and I am not prepared to abide by the vague outline the Prime Minister has given as to what he is likely to do. We have had an experience of the right honorable gentleman in the past. I have no desire to be drawn into any personal attack upon him. As a matter of fact, on such an important question, I should be sorry to detract from what should be the plane of this discussion by any reference to the right honorable gentleman. Nevertheless, the people of Australia have had experience of him interpreting his pledges in a different manner from what they mean on their plain wording. Some

people would say that he has broken his pledges. Others would say that he has interpreted them differently.

To return to Article 4, which I have already read, I maintain that there is no treaty of general arbitration with the United States of America. The honorable member for Capricornia (Mr. Higgs) has suggested that there is, but I have only to refer in this connexion to an answer which was given in the British House of Commons recently by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Frederick Hall asked—

Whether the terms of the Treaty arrangements between Great Britain and Japan precluded the possibility of assistance to Japan in any conflict which might arise between that country and the United States of America, and if assurances on this point had been given to the American Government in connexion with the consideration of their naval building programme?

The Under-Secretary, in his reply, quoted Article 4 of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, which I have already read, and then proceeded to say—

At the time when the Agreement was under negotiation a General Arbitration Treaty between this country and the United States of America was being concluded, and this circumstance inspired the adoption of the terminology of Article 4 by His Majesty's Government and the Japanese Government. As to the true spirit in which that Article was conceived the Japanese Government have always shared, and continue to share, the views of His Majesty's Government. The General Arbitration Treaty was not ratified by the United States of America Senate. Subsequently, however, on 15th September, 1914, a Peace Commission Treaty was signed and duly ratified, under which, when all diplomatic methods of adjustment had failed, all disputes between the two countries of "any nature whatsoever other than those disputes the settlement of which is provided for" are to be referred to an investigation commission. The Peace Commission Treaty is not, technically, a general arbitration treaty, but their objects are the same.

There we have, on the word of the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the statement that the Treaty which now exists between Great Britain and the United States of America is not a general arbitration treaty, in fact, is not a treaty within the meaning of Article 4 of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—It is equivalent to it, he says.

Dr. EARL PAGE.—In 1914, the British Government announced to the Japanese Government that the Peace Commission

Treaty was equivalent to an arbitration treaty.

Mr. RYAN.—The Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs said so in his reply. He said that it was not technically a general arbitration treaty, but that the objects were the same. However, what I am contending is that, in the wording of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, there is no general arbitration treaty existing between Great Britain and the United States of America, and we know how differences in the matter of wording subsequently lead to great international difficulties. At the present time there is a serious dispute between Japan and the United States of America, owing to the fact that the position of the Island of Yap was not made clear at the Peace Treaty with Germany.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The position was made perfectly clear.

Mr. RYAN.—Yet we have these two great nations disputing the matter, and France intimating to the United States of America that she will approach the question diplomatically when it comes up for discussion again.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—They are disputing over facts, and not over words.

Mr. RYAN.—It is not only Great Britain, Japan, and the United States of America or Australia that is concerned in this alliance. What about those other countries referred to in the preamble, India, and China? Surely they are entitled to be heard. I have with me a report of an interview with Dr. Wang, the Chief Justice of China, who is now passing through the United States. The report reads as follows:—

China, says Dr. Wang, has three dread enemies. The first enemy is Article XXI. of the covenant of the League, which lays down an untenable doctrine in regard to the so-called regional understandings, which is a direct challenge to China's integrity and destructive to the League itself. The second enemy is the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which Dr. Wang hopes to show Canadians will, if renewed in any form whatsoever, lead to war, in which China must necessarily participate, aiding the United States. The third enemy is the Lansing-Ishii exchange of notes with their untenable doctrine that geographical propinquity confers rights.

The people of China have some rights, and before we commit ourselves to an agreement which may do them an injustice we might surely consider the

matter. The people of China say that the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance is one of their dreaded enemies, and that Article XXI. of the League of Nations is another. Before leaving this point I would draw special attention to the fact that the Chief Justice of China has said that he is going to endeavour to persuade the people of Canada that the agreement should not be renewed. Surely he is entitled to be heard! Surely the people of Australia, whether they may or may not finally agree with him, are fair enough to allow him to be heard! And what does Article XXI. of the League of Nations provide? It declares that—

Nothing in this covenant shall be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements, such as treaties of arbitration or regional understandings like the Monroe doctrine for securing the maintenance of peace.

It has been suggested that on previous occasions great Powers have divided up the territory of various countries, and may it not be that China is being divided up in this way? The people of China think so. They fear it, and history shows that such things happen. Will we not allow the people of China to be heard, even if the United States of America, Japan, Great Britain, or any other country join together to divide up China?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Of course they will be heard.

Mr. RYAN.—The right honorable gentleman may think that they are not worthy of being heard.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Nonsense!

Mr. RYAN.—They have not been given the opportunity. They have not been mentioned in the discussion of the matter. It is with regard to territory and interests in India and China that the Anglo-Japanese Treaty is mainly concerned. The parties to it proclaim that they will allow the open door; the United States of America has always stood for the policy of the open door in China.

Mr. FENTON.—One of the contracting parties did not observe that policy during the war.

Mr. RYAN.—That is so. In a book on *American Diplomacy*, by Carl Russell Fish, Professor of History in the University of Wisconsin, it is stated at page

477, referring to the period from 1898 to 1913—

Far more important than the extension of our Dominions was our entrance into the diplomacy of Eastern Asia. Although still avoiding entangling alliances, we nevertheless engaged in the problems of the Far East as an equal participant with the great Powers of Europe. Our purposes were limited to the preservation of the integrity of China and the open door for trade—ideas that appealed to the ideals of our own people, and were calculated to command the acquiescence, if not the heartfelt approval, of foreign nations.

It appears quite obvious, from the discussion we have seen in the press lately, that the United States of America and Japan are not at one with regard to the policy which is to be pursued in China. Is it not well that we should fully understand what is the situation?

The view has been fairly generally expressed by honorable members who have spoken upon this question that we should be represented at the Imperial Conference. An invitation has certainly been extended to Australia to send a representative, and I think, in these circumstances, a representative should be sent. It would be discourteous to refrain from sending one; but it would be far better not to send a representative than to send one who will commit Australia to something that will not be in the interests of this country. For that reason it is necessary that we should still keep the control in our own hands. There is no necessity for rushing the matter. There is no hurry in regard to it, and we should retain to ourselves the right to have the final decision in the matter. If we do that we shall do a great service to our country. If a majority of the House will not carry the motion in an amended form, so as to make the final decision subject to the approval of the people of Australia, an intimation, at all events, will go forth that a large body of the people of this country are not prepared to have themselves committed to any agreement or foreign arrangement unless they are allowed to have the final word with respect to it.

Mr. CORSER.—If it be found that the Treaty protects the White Australia policy and renders it unnecessary for Australia to enter into large commitments for a navy, would not the honorable member give the Prime Minister power to agree to it on behalf of Australia?

Mr. RYAN.—Whatever is done at the Conference in the way of committing us to some international arrangement should be subject to the people of Australia having the final decision of the matter. I do not think for a moment that the policy of a White Australia is going to receive recognition in the Treaty. I shall believe it when I see it. The policy of a White Australia has never been recognised even within the British Empire. It has not been admitted within the British Empire. Does the honorable member suggest that Japan is going to recognise that policy by a specific clause in the Treaty?

Mr. MARKS.—The Prime Minister said, I think, that he was coming back to this Parliament with the agreement.

Mr. RYAN.—What he said was that nothing would be done that was contrary to the policy of a White Australia. And who is to be the judge of that? It simply means that there will be nothing in the Treaty in regard to a White Australia. That is all that is meant. As long as there is nothing in the Treaty contrary to the policy of a White Australia the right honorable gentleman says he will consent to it. What likelihood is there of any reference to White Australia in a Treaty dealing with interests in India and China? It is ridiculous to suggest it.

Mr. CORSER.—As a matter of fact, that exists at the present time.

Mr. RYAN.—If the Prime Minister interprets his duty with regard to the policy of a White Australia as he did at the Peace Conference, then he is not going to do anything in the interests of Australia. The question of a White Australia, under the Covenant of the League of Nations, has been handed over to be dealt with, not by Australia, but by the League of Nations. Is the League favorable to the policy of a White Australia?

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—The honorable member is confusing what the Prime Minister did with what the Labour party asked him to do.

Mr. RYAN.—I am not. I say that the policy of a White Australia was handed over under the Covenant of the League of Nations to be dealt with by the League.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—That is not so.

Mr. RYAN.—It is so. No reservation was made such as the people of the United States of America wanted to make. The

United States of America Senate desired to make a reservation that immigration should not be a subject for decision by the League of Nations, since it was a matter of domestic policy for the nation itself to deal with. That was one of the reservations they desired to make, and it is one of the reasons why the Covenant of the League of Nations was not accepted by the United States of America. Surely we are not so ignorant as not to know that. And yet we hear people prating about the great work done by the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) in the interests of a White Australia at the Paris Conference.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I am ignorant enough not to know it.

Mr. RYAN.—That is quite probable. Can the right honorable gentleman point to any record of a speech made by the Prime Minister at the Paris Conference in which he referred to the White Australia policy?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The honorable member cannot help being vulgar.

Mr. RYAN.—I am asking a simple question. Can the right honorable member produce any record showing that the Prime Minister uttered a word with regard to the White Australia policy at the Peace Conference?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—What rubbish!

Mr. RYAN.—It is not rubbish. There was something in the newspapers in regard to the matter, but so far we have not been shown a reference in the records. If he said anything, it was not effective.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Every one knows that he did refer to it. The honorable member knows quite well that he did.

Mr. RYAN.—My authority for the statement I have just made is a person who was at the Conference.

But I am not going to be drawn away from the main theme of this discussion. After all, it is a very serious matter, and it would be most unfortunate if we were to be influenced by any feeling with regard to it. It is a subject calling for the calmest deliberation. It requires that we should have before us all the information possible before we register a final vote upon it. That can be secured only after the Conference has taken place—after we have had an opportunity to learn the views of Great Britain, the United States of America, the Dominion of Canada, and

all the overseas Dominions. What necessity is there for a Treaty? I have heard no reasons advanced as to why it is necessary for us to enter into a Treaty at all. Canada, on previous occasions, has refused to have anything to do with any foreign Treaty. Canada may continue to take up that position.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM.—What do we fear?

Mr. RYAN.—As the honorable member inquires, "What do we fear?" I am not one of those who think that Australia is absolutely at the mercy of some foreign power. I do not think she is. The people of Australia have shown by the work which they did in the recent war that they are able to take their place anywhere, and it will be a very bad day for any Power when it attempts to invade our territory and to take possession of Australia.

Mr. MARKS.—Neither am I afraid; but we ought not to "act the ostrich."

Mr. RYAN.—I am not suggesting that we should. I am merely suggesting that when it is proposed that we should enter into an arrangement involving responsibilities on the part of this country—when it is proposed that we should enter into foreign engagements—we should take every care to see that any conclusion that is come to is subject to ratification by the people of Australia. With that object in view I move—

That the following words be added:—"but, in the opinion of this House, the representative of Australia at the forthcoming Imperial Conference, shall not be empowered to commit Australia to any agreement or understanding, except on the condition that the same shall be subject to the approval and ratification of the people of Australia."

It is because of a strong sense of duty to the people of Australia that I move the addition of these words to the motion submitted by the Prime Minister, and I am sure that quite apart from party considerations it will meet with the approval of a large majority of the people.

Mr. MARKS (Wentworth) [9.15].—I desire to address myself to the amendment, and also to the motion. I do not wish to detain the House at any length; but, as I have a good deal to say, I shall say it in as few words as possible. Before addressing myself to what might be called my hobby, the naval side of the question, I should like to refer to a few remarks by the honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan) which have struck

me. He appealed to the House to treat this matter, to a certain extent, in a statesman-like attitude. I failed to notice in his own attitude that he followed his own advice; instead, he undoubtedly treated the matter from a party stand-point. No doubt, it is his antipathy to the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) that has led him into that channel, because, though he started off in the right way, he fell by the wayside in going along.

As regards the amendment, it is, in my opinion, doomed to failure. Why? Because the ratification of a Treaty of this kind with another Power is a matter of great urgency, not one that can be delayed from month to month by a referendum to the people. We are the representatives of the people, and we have responsibilities which we are quite prepared to act up to. As representatives sent here by the people of Australia, we can send the Prime Minister of the country, no matter who he may be at the time, to England on a mission of this description. If, by a turn of the political wheel, the honorable member for West Sydney had been Prime Minister at the present time, I wonder on what terms he would be going Home. Would his terms be any better than those on which the Prime Minister is going?

Mr. RYAN.—I certainly would not desire to do anything which would not be subject to the approval of the people.

Mr. MARKS.—What did the Prime Minister say in this House? I have a pamphlet containing the right honorable gentleman's address, in which he said—

If I am asked whether the Commonwealth is to be committed to anything done at the Conference, I say quite frankly that this Parliament will have the amplest opportunity of expressing its opinion on any scheme of naval defence that is decided upon before the scheme is ratified. As to the renewal of the Treaty with Japan, this is my attitude, and I submit it for the consideration of honorable members: I am in favour of renewing the Treaty in any form that is satisfactory to Britain, America, and ourselves. I am prepared to renew it in those circumstances. If it is suggested that the renewal should take a form which would involve the sacrifice of those principles which we ourselves regard as sacred, I am not prepared to accept it. In such circumstances, I shall bring back the Treaty to this Parliament. What fairer than that could any man say? Under the circumstances, I am voicing my opinion, as a member of the

House, that the amendment moved by the honorable member for West Sydney is doomed to failure.

Mr. RYAN.—The Prime Minister said that he will bring the agreement back if he cannot agree to it.

Mr. MARKS.—The Prime Minister will bring it back if the arrangement as to the White Australia policy is not satisfactory. We will see what he will do when he does come back.

Mr. RYAN.—If he approves of what is done, he will not bring the agreement back.

Mr. MARKS.—Like the Treasurer (Sir Joseph Cook) I refuse to stand cross-examination by the honorable member for West Sydney. I was very glad to hear the honorable member for West Sydney say that Australia should have her own fleet, and control it herself. With that I entirely agree; but in war time that fleet should be under one supreme command, and controlled by the head of the British Navy.

The Prime Minister is going Home to represent us, and I think we must all admit that he has not got what I might call a naval atmosphere. To-night, however, I am going to talk to *Hansard*, and also, of course, to honorable members who have been so kind as to remain in the chamber; because I know that in his "old kit bag" the Prime Minister will take one or two *Hansards* containing the speeches that have been made during this debate, and I wish him to arrive in England with all the latest figures relating to naval expenditure by England, Japan, and America.

Honorable members who peruse their newspapers have, no doubt, seen that a great mad naval race for supremacy is going on at the present time, which, if continued, will lead to two things—the bankruptcy of the Powers concerned, and, perhaps, revolution of the peoples of those Powers. To-day Japan is afraid and suspicious of the American programme; the United States is suspicious of Japan's Naval Estimates, and suspicious of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. But there is nothing in that alliance between Japan and England that means anything aggressive to the United States.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—How do you know?

Mr. MARKS.—I know my America very well. America is suspicious that

there is something underlying that treaty, but there is absolutely nothing. Lord Northcliffe, for many weeks, has been carrying on a long correspondence with Mr. Daniells, the late Secretary for the Navy of America, on that very point. These two are very great friends, and Lord Northcliffe has been trying to convince Mr. Daniells that there is nothing whatever against America in the alliance. What is England's position? The British lion, between these two great countries, is being dragged by the tail into a position he does not appreciate or covet. Mr. Lloyd George, I think, ought to be cheered by everybody in the Empire for being quite open, and throwing on the table all his cards in connexion with the Navy. These cards show us to day a huge decrease, not only in expenditure but in ships. Mr. Lloyd George has thrown down his cards, for what purpose? For the one purpose of bringing America, Japan, and ourselves around a table in full, open, and frank conference in an endeavour to stop this mad naval race, and come to an understanding with one another. In the House of Commons the other day it was stated that since the Armistice the British Navy had cost £150,000,000, apart altogether from the great expense of demobilization and other heavy charges. The British Estimates for 1920-21 showed £105,000,000 gross for the Navy alone. For 1921-22 the Estimates are £91,000,000 gross, showing a reduction of £14,000,000. The net amounts show a reduction of £8,500,000. And now as to the British Navy itself. I am not giving away any official secrets—I would not for one moment do so—and the figures with which I am dealing honorable members could ascertain for themselves. It is intended to have thirty effective capital ships, sixteen in full commission and fourteen in reserve. The personnel, officers and men, in war time was over 400,000; up to three days ago it was 121,700. Two days ago a cable appeared in the *Argus* which showed that the personnel has been increased, for what reason I do not know, by 25,000, making, in round figures, 146,700 instead of 400,000 officers and men. The decrease still goes on. Eight obsolescent capital ships are to be sold. I know every one of them, and they are fine ships, still useful for many purposes. Those vessels are the *Hercules*, *Neptune*,

Collingwood, Colossus, St. Vincent, Temeraire, Bellerophon, and Superb. In the Atlantic what do we find. The Atlantic destroyer flotilla is in reserve; the South American Squadron is withdrawn, and the North American and the South African Squadrons are each reduced by one light cruiser. The only point that sticks out here in all these reductions is the fact that £2,500,000 only has been placed on hand as the first instalment for the replacement of capital ships. This means, as honorable members will see when I give them the Japanese and American figures, that by 1924 the British Empire, instead of being mistress of the seas, which she has been for 300 years, will be the third-rate naval Power. Just think what that means. If such be the case, no longer shall we be inspired and uplifted, as I always am, when I hear that grand old air "Rule, Britannia." Never again shall we hear those strains if this mad race goes on; and it is open to every one of us to try to stop it. That is why I am preaching this sermon, not to honorable members, but to *Hansard*, so that when the Prime Minister goes Home he may, as he passes through America, endeavour to get the great Powers concerned around the conference table. The position is dead serious. Listen! England is spending 6 per cent. of her national income on her Navy, while America is spending 10 per cent.; but Japan is spending one-third of her whole income on her Navy. America, according to General Pershing—a very fine man—is spending £1,250,000 every day of the year on her Navy and Army. He made that statement recently at a banquet at New York. By 1923 she will have built four new post-Jutland, first-class battleships, with all the latest improvements, and by 1924-5, eight first-class battleships. She will be superior to Great Britain in big ships and big guns, but weaker in light cruisers and destroyers, and in the air. She will be superior to Japan in effective ships in the ratio of 1.4 to 1; she will be weaker than Japan in battle cruisers and light cruisers. The Naval Committee of the American House of Representatives estimates that £108,666,000 more than the original estimate of £134,567,500 will be required to complete America's naval programme, making her expendi-

ture on the Navy alone £243,233,500. It is to be remembered that America is not carrying out a new programme, but is completing one made during the war, that of 1916. What is America's opinion of battleships? Recent press reports inform us that she is in favour of them. As honorable members know, a great controversy has been raging in England until only a few days ago as to the value of the battleship. It was raised by Admiral Sir Percy Scott, a very great man. It was he who invented the system of fire controls for our great ships. Many of our war vessels were not equipped with this system of control until half way through the war. He was sent for by the Admiralty, and went to Scapa Flow, where, in the quickest way possible, he fitted out the ships. Sir Percy Scott predicted, years before the war, that the capital ship would be driven off the seas by the submarine. Was he far wrong? Ninety thousand tons of our best ships were sunk by submarines. His statement is that when a great ship goes to sea—and having seen them at sea, I agree with him—it has to be shepherded on every side by those wonderful little wasps, the destroyers, to keep off the submarines, and has to be protected ahead by fleets of mine sweepers. To-day one big mine or one torpedo can send to destruction a battleship costing between £7,000,000 and £8,000,000. I have followed this controversy closely. There are pros and cons.

Mr. BOWDEN.—What does Scott say?

Mr. MARKS.—He says that the battleship is no good. There are three notable opinions which he has received. One of them is rather amusing. It came from a midshipman of the Grand Fleet, and is short and sweet, the midshipman's opinion of battleships being, "They are of no damn use." The second was from Captain Dewar, who has been sitting on the Naval Committee. He said that the object of battleships is to fight the battleships of the enemy when they come out; but, should the enemy's battleships not come out, then they are of no use. The third reply was from Rear-Admiral Sir Reginald Bacon, under whom I had the honour to serve for ten months at Dover. He said that battleships are there for the purpose

of enforcing their will on the waters. Scott replies, "What of the 90,000 tons lying at the bottom? They are enforcing their will on the waters that are above them." While on this point I wish to give an argument that Scott put forward in support of his statement that the battleship is no good. These matters will come up at the Imperial Conference. Northcliffe, the other day, wired to one of his newspapers in Australia, the *Sydney Sun*, a fine and up-to-date journal, that the representatives of the Dominions should go to the Conference with concrete proposals for every position that may arise. In other words, he thinks that our Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) should arrive with some idea as to what Australia's part should be in the next Navy. That is why I am directing my attention to these matters somewhat thoroughly. Scott points out that in their naval programme of 1911-12 the Germans devoted themselves to the building of great ships, and to the widening, deepening, and improving in every way of the Kiel Canal, so that these vessels might pass through it. They were led into that programme by Admiral Lord Fisher—Jacky Fisher, as he was popularly named, and as I prefer to call him—a strong believer in submarines as against the battleship. Fisher, as First Lord of the Admiralty, entered upon a big ship programme. The facts were made known the other day by Sir Percy Scott, who was sitting at the Admiralty with Fisher. The Germans at once said, "We must follow Britain's example," and, luckily for us, they adopted our lead, and built the big ships instead of submarines. Scott says that had they had fifty more submarines in 1914, we should to-day be a German possession, because the British Navy could not have escaped destruction. The British Board of Inventions and Research, of which Lord Fisher was chairman, and Admiral Sir Percy Scott a member—Scott was also at the head of the Anti-Submarine Board at the Admiralty—went into the question of the great ship, and came to this decision: "We could not build a battleship, or any other ship, strong enough to withstand the attack of a torpedo or a mine, and there could be no limit to the size of these under-water weapons of attack." That is to say, that

improvements in mines and torpedoes would be too much for any big ship that we could design. Later, the Board came to another decision: "Improvements could be made in the great ship to withstand the attack of the torpedo or a mine to prevent her from sinking, and to enable her to get back into port for repairs, but her size would have to be from 40,000 to 50,000 tons." About twelve months ago the cost of a large battleship was about £7,500,000. What a 50,000-ton battleship would cost, I leave it to honorable members to guess. Furthermore, these big ships "require a bath," as Sir Percy Scott puts it, every six months. Where, in Australia, have we a dock which would accommodate one of them? We have not a dock in which a big battleship could be cleaned, and a serious question for the Commonwealth to face is the matter of providing a great naval dock. Such a dock would cost millions of pounds. But whatever the size of the British Navy is to be in total quantity of ships, if it is decided that there are to be big ships, Australia must provide a dock in which they can be cleaned. Jacky Fisher's opinion on the subject of big ships is worth having. He sides with Scott. Almost his last words were: "Scrap the lot. Future fighting will be in the air." Lord Jellicoe's opinion is that, whilst we have a great mercantile fleet of ships, which are absolutely necessary for conveying troops and food, we must continue to have a great Fleet of large war-ships to guard them. In other words, so long as we have a surface mercantile marine, great capital ships will be necessary until something better is devised. Both America and Japan indorse that view. The Imperial Defence Committee will thresh out this very important point—in my opinion, the paramount one—as to what our Navy is to be, and what Australia's share in it shall be. Already a Sub-Committee, composed of Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Winston Churchill, Mr. Walter Long, Sir Auckland Geddes, and Admiral Beatty, has been sitting; and no doubt its conclusions will be placed before the Imperial Conference. The decisions of the Conference will come back to us, as the Prime Minister has rightly promised, for discussion in this Parliament. That is why I shall not deal with the matter at

greater length to-night. In regard to the position of Japan, it is a strange fact, which I know will be of interest to honorable members, that the egg of Japan's maritime and naval strength was hatched in an American incubator. All honorable members are familiar with the name of the late Admiral Mahan, who has written some most wonderful books on naval matters, which I advise honorable members to read. When his book *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future*, was translated into the Japanese language in April, 1899, the Hon. Kentaro Kaneko, ex-Minister of Agriculture and Commerce in Japan, wrote a preface to it, in which he said, *inter alia*—

Our Empire, recognised as the foremost of maritime countries in the Pacific, should, in spite of the short time since her awakening, become conscious of this fact, and increase more and more her power as such among the nations of the world. My desire is that my fellow countrymen should read this book in such a spirit, and put forth an effort to make their country a great Power in the Pacific Ocean.

That book and preface were distributed throughout Japan; it was placed in the Naval Colleges, and on every ship. Japan is to-day giving effect to those principles which were inculcated by the great American, Admiral Mahan. In to-day's *Argus* appeared the following cablegram:—

JAPAN'S MILITARY PLANS.

STRICT COMPULSORY TRAINING.

CALL TO SUBJECTS ABROAD.

New York, 20th April.

Washington official circles have been warned that all Japanese between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-seven years, without previous service, have been ordered to return for military training to Japan from the Philippines, Indies, and South Sea Islands.

Departmental officials point out that the order indicates the general inclination of Japan since the war of adopting more rigorous methods to place herself in a state of military and naval defence. Hitherto Japan has allowed considerable laxity in enforcing the law providing for the military training of her subjects abroad.

Now as to her naval plans. They are these: Sixty-eight millions for the new programme. Sixteen capital ships, that is, eight battle ships and eight battle cruisers. Twenty submarines, and large numbers of destroyers and light cruisers.

Where is the League of Nations? I regret that I have to stand up and say that I am a great believer in a League of Nations, but not the present one. There can be no effective League of Nations which does not include the United States of America. In this regard, I am depending upon the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes), whom I have known for the last twenty-two years. Some of us laugh at him, many of us criticise him; but look back on his career and see what the man has done. I say to him that he will have a golden opportunity, when passing through America, where the soil is waiting to receive from some great man a seed that will germinate and develop into the wonderful harvest of a naval holiday. Let us have such a holiday. The right honorable gentleman will have the opportunity when passing through America shortly of endeavouring to get the United States of America, Japan, and Great Britain, to say nothing of the other nations who were our honorable Allies in the war, around the council table for a friendly heart-to-heart talk with a view to stopping this mad naval race. When the Prime Minister returns, we shall have a further opportunity of considering many things; but I trust, indeed I know, that he will come back with the White Australia policy, by which we stand fast, preserved intact. Every one who has spoken in the course of this debate has used the same words, but I repeat them—"We wish to live in peace and happiness with our neighbours, the Japanese, and all other nations. We have no ideas of aggression, but, if challenged, we must look after ourselves in the matter of defence." That contingency can be avoided by a mutual heart-to-heart talk amongst the representatives of the nations. I ask the Prime Minister to do everything possible to that end.

Mr. ANSTEY (Bourke) [9.49].—My remarks upon the motion will be very brief, and I shall preface them with a few words about the naval expert and hero of Jutland, who has just resumed his seat. He has given us a large amount of information upon military and naval matters, but I am not sure that it had anything to do with the amendment. He has told you, Mr. Speaker, that he is acquainted with Admiral Scott, Admiral

Jellicoe, and various other admirals. I also would like to say that I claim a number of them amongst my acquaintances. I know Admiral Beatty; I went to college with him, and he has frequently sought my advice on great questions of State. I am sure, sir, that when I give you information of that character it will certainly counterbalance that which has been given by the honorable member for Wentworth (Mr. Marks). The honorable member said something about the non-necessity for great capital ships. He told us that the time for them had passed on account of the wonderful capacity of the submarine, which with a 15-lb. or 20-lb. charge can blow the largest ship out of the water. Then he went on to say that Australia has no dockyards for the accommodation of the big ships that she does not require. Then having demonstrated that we do not want big ships, but little ships, we find we do not want dock yards, or want anything at all, because the future battles are to be in the air. I do not know, and so I leave this question to my friend, Admiral Beatty, who is the only admiral the honorable member does not claim amongst his acquaintances.

Perhaps I may be permitted to ask one or two questions on this subject. What did the Prime Minister say? He clearly and definitely stated that, so far as naval matters are concerned, any agreement would be referred back to this Chamber. I agree with him, because any such decision will necessarily involve expenditure over which this House should exercise control. The Prime Minister also made various other affirmations. He stated, as far as I understood him, that if the Treaty with Japan contained nothing which would sacrifice the interests of the people of Australia, he would be agreeable to it. But many other subjects, equally affecting the vital interests of this country, apart from the question of White Australia, may be dealt with, and I say that any decisions regarding these should rest with the people. The Treasurer (Sir Joseph Cook) suggests that the honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan) had a referendum in mind when submitting his amendment, but I do not see any mention of a referendum in his proposal. It simply seeks a pledge from the Government that before we are committed to any course

of action the Agreement shall come back to the people for consideration. The fate of the citizens of this country should not rest entirely in the hands of one man. That is all I claim as far as the Treaty is concerned.

Mr. HUGHES.—Do you say that we have power to make a Treaty?

Mr. ANSTEY.—No. You have said that.

Mr. HUGHES.—I say we have not.

Mr. ANSTEY.—The Prime Minister at the close of his speech, said that provided the Treaty was satisfactory to Great Britain and America he would approve of it.

Mr. HUGHES.—But I did not say that I would make it.

Mr. ANSTEY.—What is the value of the Prime Minister's approval if he has nothing to do with it? I am not begging the question. I am merely making a plain statement.

Mr. HUGHES.—I say that Great Britain can make this Treaty whether we like it or not.

Mr. ANSTEY.—And that is what I am saying.

Mr. HUGHES.—Whether we approve or not, Great Britain can still make the Treaty, and would not agree to suspend it until it was submitted to the people of Australia.

Mr. ANSTEY.—That is not suggested in the amendment as far as I understand it.

Mr. HUGHES.—You look at the last lines—"subject to the approval and ratification of the people of Australia."

Mr. ANSTEY.—Quite right.

Mr. HUGHES.—Well, what does that mean?

Mr. ANSTEY.—I do not know what interpretation the honorable member for West Sydney placed upon his amendment, but as I read it there is nothing about a referendum. And, after all, there are hundreds of different ways, apart from a referendum, in which approval may be obtained. For instance, if the Government behind the back of Parliament agreed to a certain course of action, it could say that it was acting in the name and on behalf of the people. This amendment merely says that matters dealt with at the Conference shall be subject to the ratification of the people of Australia; and I am supporting it because I want those matters to come back

to us. At least, they should be brought to this Parliament for the approval of the representatives of the people.

Mr. HUGHES.—It is no good wasting time. I shall not have time to speak tonight; but I may tell the honorable member that the long-established practice is that no Treaty made by Britain binds Australia, or any of the other Dominions, until they have approved it.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Is that so?

Mr. HUGHES.—That is the long-established practice.

Mr. ANSTEY.—I am glad to hear it. I speak so seldom in this House that I do not want to be accused of wasting time when I do address honorable members. The Prime Minister now states that Treaties are subject to ratification here.

Mr. HUGHES.—All Treaties.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Now we have two statements. Honorable members may take whichever they like. As a matter of fact, Great Britain is in a position to settle the destinies of this country whether we like it or not.

Mr. HUGHES.—What I said was that this Treaty is between Great Britain—not the British Empire—and the Empire of Japan.

Mr. ANSTEY.—That is what I am saying. The Prime Minister and I agree when we talk to each other, but unfortunately we do not agree when we talk to the public. Coming back to my point again: We have, as I have said, two propositions, one being that Australia, as a subordinate country, has no say in regard to this Treaty between Great Britain and Japan. This means, of course, that the Treaty may be settled irrespective of our wishes.

Mr. HUGHES.—I did not say that. You get up with one idea in your head, and you are determined to shove it down our throats if possible; but in this case it will not go down.

Mr. ANSTEY.—I repeat, that there are two propositions. Honorable members may take whichever they like. The Prime Minister cannot hop about like a sparrow from twig to twig, selecting whichever little twig it suits him to light upon. I deny him that right in this matter. We have the proposition that Great Britain, in dealing with Japan, can settle the destinies of this country

without our having anything to say in the matter.

Mr. HUGHES.—That is not so.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Well, a little while ago it was so.

Mr. HUGHES.—No. I did not say it was so.

Mr. ANSTEY.—The Prime Minister's statement is simply an attempt to delude the public. My view is that Great Britain does settle matters of this kind irrespective of our wishes. All that she has ever done in the matter of treaties has been to pass them on to the Governments of the Dominions. It did not matter whether they said "Yes" or "No" to them. They got it "in the neck" all the same, whether they liked it or not.

Mr. HUGHES.—It is not fair to say that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. J. M. Chanter).—Order! I must ask the right honorable the Prime Minister to allow the honorable member for Bourke to proceed.

Mr. ANSTEY.—We should not forget the real position. If we have nothing further to do than to make a mere formal recognition, then the sooner we recognise it the better. Great Britain settles the problem, and simply tells us what she has done. All we have to do is to indicate our approval; and what does it matter if we do not? In the circumstances, then, it is absolutely useless for anybody—and I say it with all respect to the Prime Minister—to go Home as the representative of this country. All that is really required of our representative is to set out clearly and definitely to the Home Government where we stand. And I think there are two things we should say to the Home Government, whoever our representative may be. The first is that no obligation into which Great Britain may enter, and which seeks to bind this country in any shape or form to fight alongside of Japan, or of any other Asiatic race, against the United States of America, shall ever receive our indorsement. That is emphatic and definite. Then, the second has to do with the policy of a White Australia. I do not believe that the present Treaty in any way compromises, or takes away from us, the right to maintain our White Australia policy. The highest interests of Great Britain are

involved in not creating any more enemies. The Prime Minister has asked, What does the Old Country owe to Australia? She owes an immense deal; and in saying that I am not posing as an Australian born, for I came from the Old Country. There are Englishmen who have answered the question for us. The late Joseph Chamberlain, speaking to an immense audience in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, after the Boer war, said, "Do you not recognise that these great Dominions do something more than furnish a market? They furnish us with men, and these are of immense value to the centre of the Empire." I do not wish to be performing the patriotic stunt, but I think I can remember reading something concerning what the men of this country have done away on Gallipoli or on the Somme. Have I not read that it was the men of Australia who, either by reason of their superior social status, or from the advantages of their physique, and from their abilities as individuals, or because of all these things, were really the finest storm troops that the war produced? And have I not read that it was the Forces of this country which, when the British were overwhelmed, stemmed the German flood, poured into the gap left by the Fifth Army, and so protected Amiens that the fortunes of the war were turned to victory for the Allied cause? Thus, then, does not the Empire owe something to its outlying Dominions? But if neither material advantages from the view-point of the creation of markets, nor the fact of the outlying portions furnishing the finest storm troops amount to any real reasons why the centre of the Empire should find adequate naval and military protection for these shores against any and all foreign invasion, there is another reason. Even if this were a black man's country, and even if we were not a patriotic people and had not sacrificed ourselves as I have read that we have done in the Great War, there is another and a more cogent reason than all—one that is more powerful than either the blood ties of kith and kin or racial obligations. That other reason is, money. Great Britain has invested from £500,000,000 to £1,000,000,000 of British capital in the Dominions; and, even if she should not be prepared to fight for the maintenance of a white race within this land, it is certain, at least, that she will fight for

the protection of her bond-holders. So let us not be afraid that Britain will fail to furnish protection for Australia against foreign aggression.

Mr. MARKS.—Surely we should do our share!

Mr. ANSTEY.—Surely; and, without being called upon to go over this patriotic stunt business again, let me say that surely we have done our share. We have to consider the problems of this country. The Anglo-Japanese Treaty has been entirely altered, in its every aspect, from what it was before the war. In those days Australia's position was that whatever might have been the arrangement between Great Britain and Japan, we were largely ignorant of it. But the risks that face us to-day did not confront us before the great war, for that conflict has developed two gigantic powers. One honorable member has already pointed out the enormous new power of the United States of America. She has built up a tremendous army and a huge navy. I have before me a review which gives striking particulars of the development of the forces of offence and defence in the United States of America. Does America, at this hour, think of the curtailment of her army and navy? No. Britain to-day is exactly in the same position as the United States of America before the War. In those days Britain said, "We are prepared to arrange for and to enter into any treaties with any and every nation on earth for the curtailment of armaments. We do not wish to participate in a continuance of this mad race of armaments. But there is just one fundamental condition which we must lay down and observe; that is, that Great Britain should have two for you one. If you have 200 ships we shall have 400; if you have 2,000 we shall have 4,000." Now the war is ended and Britain can no longer maintain that ratio. Britain to-day is in the position of the United States of America before the war, and America occupies the pre-war position of Great Britain. America now says, "Oh, yes, we believe in the limitation of armaments, but if you have two we shall have three; if you have 200 we shall have 300; if you have 2,000 we shall have 3,000. We are bound to maintain ourselves as the most powerful naval and military nation on earth." The other day there was held at St. Louis a Convention at which the American namesake

of our Prime Minister, who is now a member of the United States of America Cabinet, said, "The American Republic never retreats. The American flag is the only flag that has never known defeat. We follow it because the hand that carries it is the unseen hand of God; and we shall follow it ever to victory." Every nation, of course, has its own glorious flag, which is carried by the unseen hand of God. The unfortunate circumstance is that there are so many gods. However, that does not matter. All the nations pray to their God for victory, and should he fail them they have the sense to blame their own wickedness, by way of explanation of the defeat of their God and themselves in battle. The situation existing between Japan and the United States of America is not a mere matter of the occupation of some American soil by a comparatively few Japanese. And the situation between Australia and Japan is not a mere matter of colour involving just a few men. The whole business is, in fact, a struggle of the great nations for the conquest and exploitation of China and her gigantic assets. Great Britain and Japan are in alliance for the exploitation of the four hundred millions of Chinese people, for the seizure of their railways, the realization of their tremendous iron ore deposits, the spoliation of their wealth. Japan, under an arrangement with Great Britain, has marched into Eastern Siberia and overthrown the authority there established; and, in that territory, Japan proposes to pursue a policy of exploitation.

There are two clear and definite statements which must be embodied in any Treaty that in any way identifies us with an Asiatic race if it is to be acceptable to the people of this country. For example, it must not be provided in any alliance entered into between Great Britain and Japan that these ports of ours shall be coaling stations for Japanese vessels of war, and not for the vessels of the American Fleet. In other words, the Treaty must not provide that we are to be linked up with the Japanese in opposition to the white people of the American Republic. It must not mean that we are to be bound by the alliance in such a way that in the event of war between America and Japan we should be compelled to treat the American citizens in this country as

we did the Germans during the recent conflict. Are we to be bound upon a declaration of war between America and Japan to treat every American citizen in the Commonwealth as an enemy subject and confiscate his property? Is it likely that we can be called upon to seize their ships, and at the same time be inevitably bound to grant social privileges to the Japanese, which will be denied to American citizens? Shall we be asked to give the Japanese the right to coal their transports while denying those rights to the ships of the American nation? That, I fear, is the position into which this country is being driven. Take the situation that is developing in the Atlantic. We have been told in the newspapers that the Americans have taken their fleet through the Panama Canal into the Pacific, where it is concentrating. For what purpose? We can see with what contempt British naval strength is being treated at this very hour.

The recent conflict has taught us that America is the master of the economic situation. The closing of the ports in Russia, the Black Sea, and the Baltic has thrown trade into a country which is a large producer of foodstuffs. Because of the policy that has been adopted in the past these things have become a menace, and the war has shown us that to an extent we are dependent upon the productions of the American Republic to supply us with the material with which to fight. The American Republic exercises full economic control, and we know very well the position in which the Allies would have been if America, with all the forces at her command, had not entered into the recent struggle. How necessary it is for us, united as we are to her by the ties of race, and kith and kin, and with a strong affection for the Motherland, to tell her the position that is facing us, and how false would be our position if we were to be associated with an Asiatic race in a titanic struggle with a white people. Is it not better from the stand-point of those who talk loyalty that we should follow the example of Lloyd George, when he said to the British Parliament that they did not understand the psychology of the miner? We could say with equal force that British Ministers do not understand the psychology of the Australian

people. There is no government, no law, or no power which could compel the people of Australia by reason of their peculiar psychology to fight side by side with an Asiatic race against a white man's country. Our loyalty to the Empire, if nothing else, necessitates that this point should be made quite clear, whatever Treaty may come back to us—if any does come back—after the Imperial Conference. It has been stated—who was it who said it—that this last war was a war to end all wars? Who was it who put forward such a preposterous proposal? Men have been sent to gaol for saying that the conflict was being waged for the benefit of commercial interests. Someone said that the struggle was being waged in the interests of rival robbers, who were anxious to secure the markets of the world. Human material was provided, and sacrifice and suffering endured merely for the benefit of those who were really traitors to their nation. What a preposterous suggestion, then, that the war was to end war! I remember one gentleman saying, not long ago, that the war had achieved its object, and that it had produced what it was intended to produce, and had brought to us a long and lasting peace. The same gentleman said it had landed us in the green fields of a perpetual peace; but he now says, "Who would be so stupid as to say that the war would end all wars?" I do not intend to mention names; but those who are interested can look up his speech, and see what was actually said.

Mr. HUGHES.—Will the honorable member read his own speech? Is this a performance?

Mr. ANSTEY.—Yes. It is a performance such as the right honorable gentleman has put up from time to time with great success, and to the admiration of his supporters.

Mr. HUGHES.—Why does not the honorable member say a little more about England, Japan, and America?

Mr. ANSTEY.—The Prime Minister has asked me to say a little more about England; but I have said all I desire to say. I do not desire to cast any reflections in any shape or form. I endeavour to be a pro-Australian, because I recognise that this country has given me many advantages which the land of my birth denied me. About Japan I have nothing more to say, except that

it is our clear and solemn duty to Australia to at least tell the Old Country that we are not prepared to link up with an Asiatic race in any conflict against white people. That is clear and definite. Many of us have been condemned as traitors to our country, irrespective of the fact that we are linked to Britain by ties of race and blood, because we endeavoured to speak the truth, and point out to the working people of Australia that war can produce nothing but misery. The last conflict has shown that war can produce nothing but hardship and privation for the working classes of all countries, and that it is only those who did not make any sacrifice who benefited. We see to-day that the German miners are working for an allowance of bread and sausage; the miners of France, flooded with German coal, are walking destitute in the streets of their cities; the miners of England, many of whom fought on the field of battle, have had their wages reduced by 5s. in five weeks, while the steel-workers of England have suffered a reduction of 40 per cent. in their wages. That is the reward which the blood-stained rulers of Empires have offered to the masses of their working people. Even Mr. Lloyd George has exclaimed at the miserable and repulsive conditions under which the miners in some of the poorer districts of Great Britain are working.

Mr. POYNTON.—How much better off would they have been if Germany had won?

Mr. ANSTEY.—How much better off is any one except a few dominant rich men? What is the condition of the masses?

Mr. HUGHES.—All the Germans are tarred with the same brush. They are all as bad as one another.

Mr. ANSTEY.—The right honorable gentleman is quite right; but he does not carry his words to their logical conclusion. I am quite prepared to admit that the Germans are all tarred with the same brush, from the worker to the Kaiser, but under those conditions it is only proper that, having achieved victory, we should deal out the same punishment to all, whereas the Kaiser riots in luxury while the masses of the German people are on the verge of starvation. When anyone talks to me of Germany, I do not forget the fact that leading men

of that race are also identified with the government of the country to which I belong. I do not forget that many of its financiers, and some of those who have stood on the throne of our country, have not been of British extraction, but were of the very race we are now condemning. In fact, I have read that, in the time of the Georges, the very dogs howled and barked in German. I have seen the mines of Great Britain flooded with foreign workers. The honorable member for Wentworth (Mr. Marks) has told two or three stories in connexion with naval expeditions. I shall tell a story of what happened whilst I was in London. I was invited to a dinner at Leadenhall-street by the London Port Authorities. I was seated between the chairman of the port and the engineer of the port. The chairman had made one of those dashing patriotic speeches that all people who love to fleece their countrymen can make. He had spoken of the "noble British workers." I asked the engineer who the chairman was. He said, "He is one of the greatest employers of labour in London." I asked, "What is he engaged in?" He said, "The sugar industry." "The sugar industry," I repeated, because I remembered the sugar industry in the East End of London, and how, when I was a boy, nearly every Englishman had been driven out of it to find room for cheap continental labour. The engineer replied, "Yes, the sugar industry." Thereupon I said, "He employs every race on earth except his own." The engineer said, "No, you are making a mistake." Then he leaned across to the chairman, and said to him, "Mr. Anstey has been misinformed about you. Some one has been telling him that you employ every race on earth except your own in your industry." The chairman, sipping his soup very comfortably, immediately said, "Yes, it is true; but not a German—not since the war."

Mr. HUGHES.—There are too many Englishmen like that.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Yes, there are. Any Englishman who would degrade his fellow countrymen in that way is a bigger enemy of the Empire than is a foreign workman. When I told my brother of this incident he said, "They have employed nothing but niggers and Chows since the war started." I know how the crowd

that trumpet the British Empire have loaded every ship which carried the British flag with niggers because it costs more to employ English sailors. I know how they live on the degradation and misery of their fellow countrymen. A Minister opposite me talks about "loving Germans." When I say that I detest a German I do not look across the border to see whether he is a worker, but I look up to the throne, and I do not stop howling "Down with the Germans!" when I do so. What has the Minister to say to that? He does not like the truth. All I can say is that for years things have been working clearly and definitely to the end we now see coming about, not only in Germany, France, and England, with their reductions of wages amongst the coal miners and steel workers, but also in America, where wages are to be reduced in the same odious fashion, on the ground that the Americans cannot get commodities to Europe unless the wages are reduced. On the other hand, the wages of the workmen of Europe are being reduced on the ground of American competition; and what is occurring there will take place in Australia.

Mr. POYNTON.—The honorable member ought to go to the picture shows and theatres, and see what is being done here.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Quite so. Good luck to those who have the money to attend the picture shows. The time may come when they will not have the opportunity of doing so; and good luck to them if they do attend while they have a chance of doing so.

What I have said to-night has been uttered without any ill-feeling or friction except, perhaps, when some one has tried to put the German "gag" on me. The question of naval defence and the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty boiled down amounts to the same thing, and requires no argument. The answer was given by the Treasurer when he went to Sydney the other day and told the people that we were face to face with declining revenue and increasing expenditure in the shape of interest. The very problem confronting Great Britain to-day confronts us also, that is to say, diminishing trade, declining markets, and diminishing Customs revenue owing to declining values of imports, with an increasing expenditure owing to the fact

that every new loan has to be renewed at a higher rate of interest. These difficulties face every country in the world except, perhaps, Japan and America, because of the fact that they were free from the world's conflict. Every big belligerent country has to face the facts as I have stated them. Therefore it is useless to talk about increasing our naval expenditure. We cannot do it. As far as the Treaty is concerned, quite apart from our White Australia policy, it is only fair that, before giving acquiescence to it, we should see definitely what terms it contains. I hope that the gentleman who follows me will not be subjected to the numerous interjections which have not only occupied my time, but also so disturbed my thoughts as to make my speech more theatrical than it otherwise would have been.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [10.30].—There is one thing, I think, with which honorable members will agree, namely, that boiled down into a splendid sentence—

Mr. HUGHES.—Unless we can make an arrangement to finish this debate at a reasonable hour to-morrow, we must sit till a later hour than usual to-night.

Mr. TUDOR.—There are five other speakers, apart from the honorable member for Melbourne, and including the honorable member for Barrier (Mr. Considine), who wishes to address himself to the amendment. The Whip has been round and ascertained that.

Mr. HUGHES.—It is too much to expect that five honorable members can speak between 11 o'clock to-morrow and the time when honorable members must catch their trains. We shall not sit all night, but we must sit a little later than usual this evening.

Dr. MALONEY.—I have no objection to that. There is one thing which the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) made quite plain, namely, that Australia will not fight America. The Prime Minister agrees with my statement.

Mr. HUGHES.—I have said quite plainly that we could not think of such a thing, and it is only fair to say that England would never agree to any alliance which would involve the chance

of war with the United States of America.

Dr. MALONEY.—I, too, am of that opinion. The Old Country would not accept any Treaty which would compel her to fight upon the side of another nation against the United States of America.

Mr. HUGHES.—It is unthinkable.

Dr. MALONEY.—A frontier of over 3,000 miles without a single soldier upon it divides Canada from the United States of America. That is the greatest monument of humanity. At the same time, no word of mine will be used in disparagement of Japan. I understood the honorable member for Wentworth (Mr. Marks) to say that, if the Germans, instead of following the British example of building large warships, had possessed fifty more submersibles, the flag of England would have been defeated during the recent war. I hold that, had Japan been an Ally of Germany, we today should have been endeavouring to speak either German or Japanese. Nothing could have saved us. Japan has been a loyal Ally. What do China and Japan owe to the white race? Had I been born under either of their flags, I should have only one motto—"Death to the white races!" The infamies of the past have not been forgotten; and, if it should be in the lap of the gods that Australia must be dominated by a coloured race, I hope that it will be dominated by the Chinese. No other nation has yet risen to greatness with less bloodshed or war. As the result of my brief visit to the East, I am satisfied that if a powerful nation were led by the genius of Japan, not merely Australia, but the world, would be at its feet. If ever the yellow races possess a military organizer who is the equal of that great philosopher Confucius, they will dominate the world unless all the white races combine to resist them. In such a contingency I trust that the United States of America and Great Britain will be found in the forefront. To give the ex-Kaiser his due, though I would like to see him hanging at the end of a rope, the picture that he painted was one of which the future must take cognisance. In it were depicted the armed figures of Germany, Austria, and Italy facing the terrible dragon rising

from the East. Italy, as England's best friend, was endeavouring to induce her to unsheathe the sword. I am always sorry to hear Australians unjustly decrying Americans. As the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) has truly said, America fed England during the early days of the war. As far back as 1905 I wrote the following:—

So far as we in Australia are directly concerned, I see, first of all, and more important than all, though ultimately worthless, unless knit with all, one effective ally, one union, that will beget a confident hope, or rather, a sure trust in any future, that is with the United States of America. The road thither may be very distasteful to much that is aggressively, rather than self-sacrificingly British. But even if, with cap in hand, it were better thither, and with that purpose, than ultimately, with sackcloth on our loins and ashes on our heads, to put our neck beneath the heel of the Eastern Conqueror.

I am proud that I had the prescience to foresee what would happen. Japan has honoured our race in a way that no country ever honoured it before. Recognising the trouble that Eastern nations experience, knowing that after the missionaries come the traders, Japan asked our greatest philosopher what was the best means of avoiding quarrels with other nations. In reply, Herbert Spencer wrote the most important letter that ever the brain of man devised, and Japan loyally followed his advice. The position is not merely, as the Prime Minister has said, that Japan will not allow any foreigner to own land there, that she will not permit the importation of foreign labour, and that she has actually repatriated Chinese labourers. It is far more than that. In Japan to-day, owing to the advice of Herbert Spencer, no foreigner can hold land or have an interest in the tramways or railways of the country. The late Sir Malcolm McEacharn was Consul for Japan in Victoria, but he could not get a franchise from the Japanese Government. He had to trust to the honesty of the Japanese. Foreigners may not hold land under lease in Japan, and provision is made for only annual tenancies. At one time no European was allowed to remain in Tokio, the capital, unless he was a Government servant. Foreigners are not allowed to hold interest in mines or coasting steamers, nor to have shares in the principal banks. I do not think

I shall weary honorable members if I read the wonderful letter which Herbert Spencer addressed to Kentaro Kaneko, on 26th August, 1892, and upon which these provisions were based. It is to be found at page 321 of the *Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer*, by David Duncan, LL.D. It is as follows:—

Your proposal to send translations of my two letters to Count Ito, the newly-appointed Prime Minister, is quite satisfactory. I very willingly give my assent.

Respecting the further questions you ask, let me, in the first place, answer generally that the Japanese policy should, I think, be that of keeping Americans and Europeans as much as possible at arm's length. In presence of the more powerful races, your position is one of chronic danger, and you should take every precaution to give as little foothold as possible to foreigners.

It seems to me that the only forms of intercourse which you may with advantage permit are those which are indispensable for the exchange of commodities and exchange of ideas—importation and exportation of physical and mental products. No further privileges should be allowed to people of other races, and especially to people of the more powerful races, than is absolutely needful for the achievement of these ends. Apparently, you are proposing, by revision of the treaty powers with Europe and America, "to open the whole Empire to foreigners and foreign capital." I regard this as a fatal policy. If you wish to see what is likely to happen, study the history of India. Once let one of the more powerful races gain a *point d'appui*, and there will inevitably, in course of time, grow up an aggressive policy which will lead to collisions with the Japanese. These collisions will be represented as attacks by the Japanese which must be avenged; Forces will be sent from America or Europe, as the case may be; a portion of territory will be seized, and required to be made over as a foreign settlement; and from this there will grow eventually subjugation of the entire Japanese Empire. I believe that you will have great difficulty in avoiding this fate in any case; but you will make the process easy if you allow any privileges to foreigners beyond those which I have indicated.

In pursuance of the advice thus generally indicated, I should say, in answer to your first question, that there should be, not only a prohibition to foreign persons to hold property and land, but also a refusal to give them leases, and a permission only to reside as annual tenants.

To the second question, I should say, decidedly prohibit to foreigners the working of the mines owned or worked by Government. Here there would be obviously liable to arise grounds of difference between the Europeans or Americans who worked them and the Government, and these grounds of difference would immediately become grounds of quarrel, and would be followed by invocations to the English or American Governments or other

powers to send forces to insist on whatever the European workers claimed, for always the habit here and elsewhere among the civilized peoples is to believe what their agents or settlers abroad represent to them.

In the third place, in pursuance of the policy I have indicated, you ought also to keep the coasting trade in your own hands, and forbid foreigners to engage in it. This coasting trade is clearly not included in the requirement I have indicated as the sole one to be recognised—a requirement to facilitate exportation and importation of commodities. The distribution of commodities brought to Japan from other places may be properly left to the Japanese themselves, and should be denied to foreigners, for the reason that again the various transactions involved would become so many doors open to quarrels and resulting aggressions.

To your remaining question, respecting the intermarriage of foreigners and Japanese, which you say is "now very much agitated amongst our scholars and politicians," and which you say is "one of the most difficult problems," my reply is that, as rationally answered, there is no difficulty at all. It should be positively forbidden. It is not at root a question of social philosophy. It is at root a question of biology. There is abundant proof, alike furnished by the intermarriages of human races and by the interbreeding of animals, that when the varieties mingled diverge beyond a certain slight degree, the result is invariably a bad one in the long run. I have myself been in the habit of looking at the evidence bearing on this matter for many years past, and my conviction is based upon numerous facts derived from numerous sources. This conviction I have, within the last half-hour, verified, for I happen to be staying in the country with a gentleman who is well known as an authority on horses, cattle, and sheep, and knows much respecting their interbreeding; and he has just, on inquiry, fully confirmed my belief that when, say, of different varieties of sheep, there is an interbreeding of those which are widely unlike, the result, especially in the second generation, is a bad one—there arises an incalculable mixture of traits, and what may be called chaotic constitution. And the same thing happens among human beings—the Eurasians, in India, and the half-breeds in America, show this. The physiological basis of this experience appears to be that any one variety of creature in course of many generations acquires a certain constitutional adaptation to its particular form of life, and every other variety similarly acquires its own special adaptation. The consequence is that, if you mix the constitution of two widely divergent varieties which have severally become adapted to widely divergent modes of life, you get a constitution which is adapted to the mode of life of neither—a constitution which will not work properly, because it is not fitted for any set of conditions whatever. By all means, therefore, peremptorily interdict marriages of Japanese with foreigners.

I have, for the reasons indicated, entirely approved of the regulations which have been established in America for restraining the

Chinese immigration; and had I the power would restrict them to the smallest possible amount, my reasons for this decision being that one of two things must happen. If the Chinese are allowed to settle extensively in America, they must either, if they remain unmixed, form a subject race in the position, if not of slaves, yet of a class approaching to slaves; or if they mix they must form a bad hybrid. In either case, supposing the immigration to be large, immense social mischief must arise, and eventually social disorganization. The same thing will happen if there should be any considerable mixture of the European or American races with the Japanese.

You see, therefore, that my advice is strongly conservative in all directions, and, I end by saying as I began—keep other races at arm's length as much as possible.

I give this advice in confidence. I wish that it should not transpire publicly, at any rate during my life, for I do not desire to rouse the animosity of my fellow countrymen.

P.S.—Of course, when I say I wish this advice to be in confidence, I do not interdict the communication of it to Count Ito, but rather wish that he should have the opportunity of taking it into consideration.

In order to show how well-founded was the fear of this great man that this advice would rouse the animosity of his fellow countrymen, I propose only to quote the following paragraph from the same work:

Though he did not wish this letter made public during his life, Spencer has indorsed on the copies of the correspondence, "My letters of advice contained in this batch should be read and published." Shortly after his death, the letter of August 26, was sent from Tokio for publication in the *Times* (18 January, 1904), which wrote of it as giving "advice as narrow, as much imbued with antipathy to real progress, as ever came from a self-sufficient, short-sighted Mandarin, bred in contempt and hatred of barbarians."

I conjure my fellow Australians to approach Japan, if we must do so, with the magic word, "reciprocity"—that wonderful word that comes from Confucius. Let us say to the Japanese that as they honoured our race and language by going to the greatest of our philosophers for advice, they cannot blame Australians if we follow their example and desire to keep other races at arm's length. We occupy the wider spaces of a whole continent. We have 11.4 times the territory of Japan. We may say to the Japanese, "If you can show that Australians are settled in your country, we will permit eleven times as many Japanese to settle in Australia, and will allow them to have eleven times more territory

Dr. Maloney.

in Australia than an Australian is permitted to have in Japan." The population of Japan is 11.4 times that of Australia, and if 100 Australians go to Japan, let us welcome 1,100 Japanese to Australia. But let us have reciprocity with Japan in the fullest sense of the word.

After much reading and great study of their arts during weeks and months spent in the British Museum, I came to the conclusion that the Japanese are the greatest and most artistic race that the world has ever seen. I may be reminded of the sculpture of the elder Greece, and I am prepared to own that it is more beautiful, and for a single reason. The Japanese did not choose beauty as an attribute of their gods, whereas the elder Greece more than any other nation that the world has ever seen, not even excepting our own race of the present day, made their gods beautiful. Honorable members have only to look at the copy of the great classic made by Richardson, the Australian sculptor, who was the first to win the double prize of painting and sculpture in England's Academys. I refer to his glorious classic "Mercury," a copy of which may be seen on the top of the *Age* newspaper building. "Mercury" was the god of thieves and murderers, but his statue is made beautiful by the genius of the elder Grecian race. The bronzes of Japan equal those of Greece. No other nation can compete with the Japanese in lacquer work. Their carving on wood is unequalled. In black and white the works of Hokasai, whose period closed in 1859, are equal to the very highest productions of French artists, and Whistler said that the genius of painting was left with Velasquez and Hokasai, of Japan. The genius of the Japanese people is evident in everything they have done. The honorable member for Cowper (Dr. Earle Page) will agree with me that the genius of the Japanese in medical and surgical science is admitted.

Dr. EARLE PAGE.—Hear, hear!

Dr. MALONEY.—A seven years' course is required for one of their medical diplomas. I can never forget that when a case of small-pox was discovered on a Japanese vessel by which I was

travelling with our worthy Serjeant-at-Arms, the first man to come up to be vaccinated was the captain himself.

Wages in Japan have risen 200, 300, and 400 per cent. since the time I published the notes to which I have referred. I do not wish to take credit for the book in which they appear. There is glorious language in that book, which is not mine, but that of my dearly-cherished friend, Frank Myers, the genius who made the name of "Telemachus" ring through not only Australia, but the United Kingdom, by the articles he published in the *Australasian*. When I speak of Japan, no word of mine can be construed into contempt of the Japanese people. I trust that the unjust, cruel, and ridiculous criticisms of those people which have marred Australian journalism have passed for ever. They were prevented during the war, and they certainly should never be resumed. The Japanese are the cleanest race in the world. The first thing a domestic servant in Japan asks for is that she may have two hot baths a day. I can fancy a domestic help going to Toorak and asking the lady of the house for one hot bath a day. I can smile at such a request when I remember some of the dens in which I found servants accommodated when I was in active medical practice. The Japanese servant asks for two hot baths a day, and she will not accept service unless she can get one hot bath a day. The rickshaw man who drives you in Japan will give you a gilt-edged card, and will have his hot bath at the end of each day.

The Japanese people were forced to open their doors. I wish them good luck, and I do so in gratitude for the help which they recently rendered us in Australia. But I want this beloved Australia of ours to be handed down as a white man's heritage. I want Australia, if possible, to surpass little Switzerland, that country of three nationalities buried in the bosom of the Alps, which has earned the name of "the school-house of Europe." I want our beloved Australia to become the school-house of the world by setting the example of just laws, the elimination of the curse of poverty, and the giving to every man and woman a fair deal. I have seen some of the miseries of England, and they scared my mind. I hated and loathed

not the race from which my mother, a good old Somersetshire woman, sprung, but the laws which they permitted to obtain. One or two members of this House were present when I told a combined Committee of the House of Commons and House of Lords that the British franchise was worthy only of a barbarian nation. If honorable members care to turn to the *Statesman's Year-Book* for 1914, from which I have quoted more than once in this House, they can verify the statement I made at the time, that the franchise in Great Britain was not equal to that of China, Japan, or Turkey. I was robbed of my vote for four years in London. I told the people there that their franchise was fitted only for a barbarian race, and that until they gave every man and woman in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales a vote, they were nothing but a barbarous people. England to-day is cursed with the House of Lords, which is an embodiment of the vile and wicked past. She does not give human beings a fair show. Let any man look at the wheat lands of England, and he will find vast areas of wheat lands in that country had gone out of cultivation for a period of fifty years prior to the war. Go into the English workhouse and see how the poor are kept. That little land, fifty years before the war, used to grow more food for its people than it grows now. As a boy I was told that the laws of Ireland were unjust; that Irish landlords spent money in London that they ought to have spent in Ireland, leaving their agents to extract all they could from the tenants; but I was enjoined to remember that England had more poor people suffering from unjust laws than Ireland had, because there were more people in England. The death rate in England was as high as 800 for every 1,000 children in the first year after birth. The next highest death rate was 300, and the difference of 500 died from want of proper food, shelter, and clothing. I love England and honour its greatness; I recognise that its language has not only conquered the Celts of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, but is the language of 100,000,000 people in the United States of America. The outlook for England will be great if she does not allow her cursed love of money and capital to cause her to sign a Treaty which Australia will

not permit. I indorse the by no means uncertain words of the Prime Minister, which were deadly in their determination, to the effect that by no act of his would he agree to a Treaty between England and Japan if it might mean war or disagreement between us and the United States of America.

Mr. BOWDEN.—Is that not the attitude of Great Britain, too?

Dr. MALONEY.—I am always afraid of the House of Lords—that abomination of the past and laughing-stock of the present. The House of Lords, which numbers 600 members, deemed a quorum of three sufficient to manage the whole British Empire. The House of Lords must go. I believe the majority of the House of Commons would hate the idea of war with the United States of America, and that ninety-nine out of every one hundred average English-speaking people have the same feeling. The honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) echoed the thoughts that have been enunciated by the Prime Minister, only much more determinedly. We should show America our appreciation of the glorious words spoken by Admiral Sperry, when he called at New Zealand on the occasion of the visit of the American Fleet. He was asked about the yellow peril, and, though I forget his words, they were to the effect, "You need never be afraid so long as the Stars and Stripes float over the oceans of the world." These were glorious words; and this House will determine that under no circumstances shall Australians be put into a position which would lead them to fight alongside an Asiatic race against the United States of America. If I am any judge of the fighting instincts of that great country, which fed England, Scotland, and Wales during the war, and did so much to end the war, it will look on Australia as a younger brother, and carry on the work she has undertaken. The United States of America stands sentinel between the diseases of the East and Australia. No ship can go into any port of the Manilas without strict inspection; the mere dictum of the captain is not taken. A paper has to be signed by a Consul of the United States of America at every port, showing the number of infectious and contagious cases during the

previous fortnight or so. This declaration is viseed by American Consuls, even on the coast of Australia; and we owe a need of praise to the United States of America on that account. When I, together with Mr. Speaker, other members of the House, and the Sergeant-at-Arms were travelling from Thursday Island, two of our party were vaccinated with American lymph on one arm and Japanese lymph on the other, and got on splendidly. As for myself, my old and beloved friend, the honorable member for Herbert (Mr. Bamford), and the President of the Senate, we were vaccinated with what I call filth, so-called Australian lymph, which sent our temperatures up unpleasantly high. I feel certain that the Prime Minister will keep imbedded in his mind the thought that we Australians, loving the Homeland as we do, would be glad if a Treaty is arrived at with Japan with which we can agree, and which cannot, under any circumstances, be construed into an agreement to take part with Japan against the United States of America.

Mr. BRENNAN (Batman) [11.10].—I am very sorry that I am compelled by force of circumstances to address myself to a very serious question at such a late hour. As a matter of fact, during the first couple of days of the present part of the session, I did not intrude myself into the serene atmosphere which surrounds you, sir, for the reason that I had come to the House in the first place, in the confident expectation of being an interested witness of a contest between the forces of Cadwallader Llewellyn on the one side, and Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled on the other. I was so disappointed that I retired to my mountain fastnesses for several days to recover my mental equilibrium. However, when I heard that foreign affairs were being discussed, and about to be settled without reference to this Parliament, it appeared to me that, at whatever inconvenience to myself, I should record a few scattered thoughts on the subject. The motion before the House is that a paper should be printed. It is a favorite method with the Prime Minister for inviting and securing discussion on matters more or less related to the paper in question. I

hope the paper will ultimately be printed because, by that means alone, rather than by anything that is said in the course of this discussion, we shall gather what is involved in the Mandate to us of certain territories in the Pacific. For the rest, I shall not defile my soul with the base falsehood that I agree in any substantial part with what the right honorable the Prime Minister said in moving the motion. I am not worrying over the new and mysterious status which Australia is assumed to have won, and now to possess, whatever may be meant by this phrase of "new and enlarged status," because my view is that if the Australian Labour party comes into power, as they doubtless will at no very remote date, they will be influenced in regard to foreign affairs more by the deliberately expressed will of the Australian people than by the expression of persons outside, however eminent, or in however solemn convocation they may be assembled. On the other hand, if what I may call by the somewhat vulgar title of "Hughesism" is to prevail, we shall doubtless pursue our easy alternate rôle of sycophant and boaster. On the one hand we shall continue to declare, through our responsible statesman, that we are a nation new-born and giant-like, almost invulnerable, and with the other voice we shall continue, abject and toadying, to insist in cringing tones that Australia is nothing save what it is by the grace of Britain, and that we are but as the froth blown from the cup of Britain's greatness. As might have been expected, the Prime Minister has clothed a great deal of platitude in ornate, high-sounding, elegant phrases. He was joined in this regard by the honorable member for Balaclava (Mr. Watt). These two gentlemen apparently forgot all such mundane and local affairs as the stage-managed reception of one by the other, forgot entirely that very unflattering testimonial put on record by the honorable member for Balaclava relating to the Prime Minister, and agreed to bury their differences in a kind of turgid stream of rhetorical cant. A fair sample of this is supplied in such phrase as "The British Constitution is the supreme achievement of the genius of the race for self-government. History may be ransacked in vain to find a parallel." It seems to be assumed, and doubtless it is the correct

thing to say it, as something beyond argument, that the British Constitution is to be regarded as a perfect instrument, because, with its weird concatenation of law and custom, the people of Britain—and by the people of Britain I mean especially the outraged and despoiled masses of the British people—have suffered no more than the people of other countries under other autocracies. Occasionally the supreme jest is perpetrated, by some gilded and well-paid hereditary aristocrat, of declaring that Britain is a great Democracy. I heard the honorable member for Melbourne (Dr. Maloney) with pleasure when he dealt with the position of Britain as a great Democracy. In recent years, at all events, there have been some more hopeful signs, so far as Britain and her harassed and disfranchised people are concerned. Although one who claims to be a real Democrat cannot help feeling some disappointment at the abortive efforts recently made by the suppressed and depressed human atoms of Britain, through their organized labour unions, to assert themselves, still there are, in the recent industrial uprisings in that country, some hopeful signs that my brethren in Great Britain are beginning, at long last, to take the correct measure of the perennial liar of their country. This great Empire of ours, about which we should speak, so we will be told, only words of reverence, with bated breath, is great in my view in proportion to the measure of the independence of its component parts. But so far as its Government retains its grip upon any of those parts logically and geographically separated from it, and separated, too, from it in their ideals and spirit, so far does this Empire, through its responsible spokesmen, become and continue to be a pestilent nuisance and failure. In Australia, Canada, and South Africa we may flatter ourselves with the external manifestations of Empire. We flatter ourselves with the comforting thought that no harm comes to us from the Imperial connexion, for the very simple reason that there is nothing more than the sentiment of union with the fact of independence. If at any moment any person were to attempt to forge upon Australia a real chain of connexion, at once the spirit of revolt would run through the length and breadth of this continent. The honorable member for Balaclava (Mr. Watt)

admitted that there remains nothing at the present time but an invisible line. The truth is that the Imperial connexion between Australia and the Motherland is purely one of sentiment. I respect that sentiment. I do not find fault with those who turn to their motherland in a spirit of respectful regard and affection; on the contrary, I respect them for it. I appreciate and share their viewpoint, but were it attempted to forge a chain upon this country, or upon Canada, or upon South Africa, which would in any way limit the free action of their political independence, revolt would be created in the Dominion concerned. Of course, absolute independence is limited, as we recently found to our cost, in the event of war. In the delirium of war men handed themselves over—may we hope that they will do better in the future—as bond slaves to the war workers. But, that apart, in India at present, and in Egypt in the recent past, the measure of exploitation, disfranchisement, and oppression is the measure of our Imperial greatness. In Ireland, force and terror are “the supreme achievement”—to quote the words of the Prime Minister—“of the genius of our race.” So much for a few casual references to Empire.

Now about the proposed Japanese alliance. An alliance of the kind is to be welcomed in so far as it is the expression of goodwill on the part of the two countries towards each other. As one who claims to be something of an internationalist, I do not hesitate to express pleasure at sentiment of that kind manifested in an alliance between Japan and Great Britain. So far as it is such, it will be welcome. But so far as it is a breach of both the spirit and the letter of the covenant of the League of Nations, it is to be deprecated. So far as it is a reversion to secret agreements and hidden diplomacy, it is to be resented and condemned. So far as it constitutes a policy compromising us in our White Australia ideals and binds us to a race of the coloured family, and drags us, whether we will or no, into antagonism with the greatest white race in the world outside our own, it is to be regretted and condemned. But I am more concerned with some observations of the Prime Minister in regard to this alliance. I recollect him saying

that, as sure as we stand here, this Empire of ours would never have been built without British control of the seas. "By an all-powerful British Navy this Empire has been built up; only by a powerful British Navy can it be maintained."

What the right honorable gentleman says may or may not be true. If it is true, it is a dreadful confession. It is an admission and a re-statement of the first principle of his creed that might is right. It bears out what we have always thought of him: that it is still his view that our greatness stands on guns and gasconading, and that fight and force are at the base of our mightiness. In other words, it is just such a crude expression of Prussianism as an international policy as we had good reason to expect from the present Government. Ministers appeal to history in support of the policy when they say that we live by virtue of the all-powerful British Navy. Thus every cut-throat pirate returning with his ill-gotten gains to lay them at the foot of a grateful British King, is, according to this view, to be our inspiration and our model. It is true that when the Prime Minister insisted that might is right, and that our greatness and our salvation depend upon the carrying power of our guns and the number and variety of our ships, he made the tardy acknowledgement that the Almighty may play some little part—though a part clearly ancillary to that of the Navy. The Almighty is secondary to the Navy, and acting in a subordinate capacity. Torn as the centre of the Empire is to-day with local industrial upheavals, distracted as it is by the Irish and Indian risings—risings against savage and persistent injustice—this Empire cannot hope to endure, and will not deserve to endure, unless it substitutes a moral claim for the claim of *force majeure*. We are indebted to the Leader of the Government (Mr. Hughes) for the statement that every Australian citizen realizes that the destiny of this country is to be played on the mighty stage of the Pacific. That may be; but why is it not to be played within the very extensive domain of this continent, which is surely large enough and broad enough to stage even so great a drama? The answer is—because we are about to partake of the first fruits of our policy of annexation, which, under the name of Man-

dates, compromises our safety in the Pacific, and makes it necessary, as the Prime Minister says is obvious to every citizen, that the destiny of this country is to be played on the mighty stage of the Pacific.

Mr. BAYLEY.—Hear, hear!

Mr. BRENNAN.—Apparently, the honorable member is satisfied that we should have our responsibilities indefinitely and indecently extended beyond our needs. If it had not been for this mischievous policy of annexation, carried on in breach of the solemn pledges we made on entering the Peace Conference, we might still have thought that as a peace-loving people, with well-defined boundaries and an insular situation, we stood in a very hopeful situation for a long, if not perpetual, peace in the country to which we have established at least some sort of prescriptive claim.

Now as to the policy of White Australia, which, as I said a moment ago, is compromised by the alliance which the Prime Minister has assured us in advance, he is going to the other side of the world to approve, because he told us that on the White Australia he would insist. "I shall have my way" were his words. That is a very curious position for the right honorable gentleman to take up. It would not be curious for members on this side of the House; it would be logical and natural for them to say that, but what right has the Prime Minister, as Leader of the Government, and in view of what he has said, to declare that he will have his way against Britain? Has he not declared that we are but dross to Britain? Has he not declared that we should kneel at the foot of Britain, acknowledging our complete dependence? Has he not declared that we owe her everything, and that in ourselves we are nothing? And yet upon the very first matter in regard to which there is likely to be a clash of opinion between Britain and ourselves he has the temerity to assure this Parliament, the country, and the world, so far as his voice reaches, that he will have his way. Upon what principle of justice, upon what principle of propriety or common honesty, can he claim to have his way if what he has said is true? Doubtless he will have his way, for the reason that the Government will not be very much concerned with either the propriety or honesty of the position

they take up in this regard. I may be asked if I am in favour of the ideal of a White Australia. I am whole-heartedly in favour of it as an ideal, and I would not be afraid or ashamed, if I understood their language, to carry that view into the heart of the Japanese nation itself, because I believe, as many spokesmen of coloured races themselves have said, that there are sound reasons—economic, religious, and other—which should move the people of any race differing as the Oriental races do from our own, to accept the principle of a White Australia as being in the best interests of all the nations concerned. In other words, the purity of the race, whatever it is, is involved; the maintenance of the ideals of the race, whatever the race may be, is involved, together with much else. Therefore, I would not be afraid or ashamed to advocate a White Australia even in the capital of Japan. But I do not admit for a single moment that the Prime Minister's view-point is the correct one. I do not accept for a second his statement that this country lives only by the grace of Britain, nor will I submit to the view, without challenging it, that the national safety depends upon ships and cannon and force. I contend that there are other better, more effective, and cheaper means of securing our immunity from war, and that, therefore, not only great material good may be obtained, but infinitely higher moral benefits accrue to the nation so acting. I would not for the world hurt the feelings of members of the Government or their friends outside, but when they would persuade me that the safety of this country and Britain and the world depends upon these ships floating somewhere in other seas, and the guns contained in them, and the men who man them for the purpose of blowing the lives out of their fellow-men, I ask, "What did this Navy do during the great war?" First of all, it did not prevent war. Secondly, it did not take any part in the war that is worth considering. It did not even prevent the seas being overrun with raiders and submarines, which in their turn also were found to have pursued a futile and useless course. The British Navy on the one side and the ships of the enemy on the other side—the one lying idle in its harbors, and the other lying at the bottom of the sea—remain to-day splendid tributes to the uselessness of the policy of destruction.

Mr. Brennan.

And now, after all the money we have spent upon the great British navy; after all the taxation we have heaped upon the people of Great Britain and Ireland, and incidentally upon the people of this country, for its maintenance; after all our vain boasting that we owned and controlled the seas—though God knows why the people of any country should claim to control ocean highways destined for the use of the world—we are told that the navy is inadequate for the protection of Australia. This is the end of it all. This is the end of our sacrifices to build and maintain a navy that to-day, at the zenith of its power, is admitted to be inefficient for the purpose for which it was created. More ships, more blood, more fight. Let us take up the burden again and set out on our long road without a goal carrying our chain without an end.

My own view is that our claim to hold this Commonwealth of Australia rests on two grounds, interwoven one with the other, partly legal and partly moral. In the first place, if we are to assert the principle of a White Australia we must be able efficiently and effectively to occupy this country. We cannot hope to pursue definitely the dog-in-the-manger policy of occupying a country unused and unpeopled, placing a handful of people in certain portions of this great territory, while allowing other portions to remain unoccupied. We cannot, with 5,000,000 of people, hope to possess indefinitely a continent capable of adequately maintaining hundreds of millions of people. On legal and on moral grounds we must effectively occupy Australia if we hope to retain intact our White Australia policy. Is the policy of this Government calculated to make Australia a white man's land? Why, at this very moment this Government, while expressing their determination to have their way so far as the exclusion of the colored races is concerned, are equally determined to have their way in excluding some people of the greatest white races in the world. Out of the folly and bitterness of the recent war, and the spirit of futile vindictiveness which it engendered the Government now refuse to admit into the Commonwealth colonists from countries with which, in recent years, we have been at war. Only recently the Government passed legislation

through this House imposing restrictions on immigration which will render it very unlikely indeed that desirable immigrants will be attracted to this country so long as those restrictions stand.

Mr. BAYLEY.—People like Esmond, for instance?

Mr. BRENNAN.—The Government insists on passing naturalization laws which must discourage desirable people from presenting themselves for naturalization; and generally, by their insane policy of exclusion, they are making this country as unattractive as possible to the people of other lands. I was not addressing myself for the moment to the position of any distinguished men of letters of the kind referred to by the honorable member for Oxley (Mr. Bayley) when he mentioned Mr. Esmond. Only seldom does a man of such distinguished parts come here, and so far as general administration of our immigration laws is concerned, it is not worth our while to particularize the case of any individual, since the vindictiveness and stupidity of a policy which would exclude such a man are only part of the general mismanagement of the affairs of this country.

I hope that, by means of a sane international policy, which I do not expect from the present Government, we shall be able to sustain our ideal of a White Australia. I believe that, when we finally abandon this baleful theory that we live by virtue of our guns and ships; when we are prepared to extend the right hand of fellowship to the people of every country in the world, whatever their colour may be; and to argue the question of immigration on sound lines of conciliation, we may hope to make Australia secure and to further indulge the hope that the Commonwealth will then be effectively occupied and substantially populated by people of the white races, people who deserve to retain it.

Mr. BLAKELEY (Darling) [11.47].—Before dealing with the amendment submitted by the honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan), I desire to refer to clause 2 of the Treaty. In the agreement of 1902, clause 2 provided that if one contracting party, in the defence of its territorial rights, became involved in war, the other contracting party would remain neutral. But in the agreement

of 1905 and 1911 that particular section was considerably altered, inasmuch as it provided that, "If by reason of an unprovoked attack or aggressive action, wherever arising—". That is, instead of keeping within the limits of the territory it goes further. It will go into the Pacific and into the Atlantic. It will go anywhere. It is not strictly confined to China or to Japan, or to India. Article II., from which I have just quoted, is set forth in the agreement of 1911 thus:—

If by reason of an unprovoked attack or aggressive action, wherever arising, on the part of any other Power or Powers, either High Contracting Party should be involved in war in defence of its territorial rights or special interests mentioned in the preamble of this Agreement, the other High Contracting Party will at once come to the assistance of its Ally, and will conduct the war in common, and make peace in mutual agreement with it.

The agreement as it at present stands cannot possibly be subscribed to by this Parliament or by the people of Australia, and most certainly not by the Government of this country. The enthusiastic protestations of the Government and their supporters, their general attitude regarding the White Australia policy, have been such as to preclude their subscription to anything in the nature of the terms of Article II. I am wondering what truth there is in that which is freely stated in Europe generally, and in America particularly, namely, that the many late converts to the White Australia policy have merely adopted that attitude for the purpose of working up the people of Australia into a frame of mind in which it may not be hard to get 30,000 or 40,000 Australian troops sent into Asia. Sir Charles Rosenthal, speaking at Orange, New South Wales, some months ago, stated that he would not be at all surprised if within a few months Australian soldiers were participating in a war on the Indian frontier. Following the publication of those remarks the honorable member for Maribyrnong (Mr. Fenton) asked the Treasurer (Sir Joseph Cook), who was at the time in charge of the House, whether it was a fact that Sir Charles Rosenthal had made such a statement, whether he was in the employ of the Commonwealth, and what authority he had so to speak. The Treasurer, in a more or less flippant reply, said he

was not responsible for what Sir Charles Rosenthal might have said concerning the participation by Australian soldiers in a war on the Indian frontier. There are two facts outstanding in connexion with the position in India. One is that the Ind'ian Nationalist movement is determined to secure some kind of freedom from the present oppression exercised by the capitalists of Great Britain, and the other is that the British Government, representing British capitalists, are just as determined that there shall be no such measure of freedom afforded the peoples of India. And it is frankly stated in Europe, and even more frankly stated in America, in militarist circles, that there will be war in India shortly. Interrogations have emanated from London concerning the attitude of Australia in the matter of her participation, should war break out in India. It is said that the *modus operandi* will take the form of Afghan risings on the frontier, which will grow to such dimensions as to necessitate the use of large bodies of troops in that theatre. Due to the state of mind created by the enthusiastic adulation of certain recent converts to the White Australia policy, the Australian people will be expected to say, "Yes, if Australia is to be threatened by Asia, for God's sake let us fight in Asia." It is quite freely stated in the American press, and in certain sections of the London press, that already military operations have been planned in India, that transportation plans have been prepared, and that Australian and New Zealand officers are already there. Whether they were sent with the cognisance of this Government I do not know, but would like to learn. When Sir Charles Rosenthal tells the people of Australia that he would not be surprised if within eighteen months we are fighting in India, and when we have these pertinent observations in Europe and America, it is about time the people were informed exactly what is meant. I should like to know from Ministers in this House whether it is a fact that there are Australian officers ready to take up their duties in Ind'a, and that it is intended to raise 40,000 soldiers in Australia to go to India. This matter will come before the Imperial Conference. No doubt, the Government have been already notified that the Indian question will be one of the

most important arising for discussion. I dare say the Prime Minister has given some thought to the attitude he will adopt on behalf of Australia with respect to any troubles developing in India. One can quite understand the necessity for getting troops other than British to go to India. In the first place, the British Government have more than sufficient trouble on their hands at Home. They are finding it increasingly difficult to get soldiers to go to Ireland. There has been something like a six months' recruiting campaign, and only the force of public opinion has prevented its continuance. Last month the authorities were appealing for troops for Ireland and for India. The industrialists of Great Britain are becoming more emphatic in their objection to British soldiers being sent to portions of the Empire to subdue possible risings or subjugate a section of the nation to which they belong. One can readily see that the massing of an army to go to India to suppress that nation would be extremely difficult. Hence an attempt will be made to drag Australia, willy-nilly, into a conflict in India. Possibly this is merely something that has been discussed in certain circles in London and in Europe. Probably it has only been an academic discussion, and the questions sent to Australia as to our opinion on such a proposal are also academic, having been sent merely with the idea of getting information. Probably the statement made by Sir Charles Rosenthal was merely for the edification of a few men who desired to continue their military career, but the sinister significance appears to be that the matter was discussed by an officer who occupied an important position in the Australian Imperial Force. At the same time, statements are published in the American and European press on practically the same lines. Before this discussion closes, the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) or a representative of the Government should inform this House and the people of Australia whether the very grave position which exists in India is to be discussed at the Imperial Conference, and, if so, what course the discussion will follow. It is said—I am asking for confirmation or denial—in London to-day that a campaign will very shortly be started in India, and we know that for a long time troops have been gathering there ostensibly for the purpose of preventing the

natives from rising, and overthrowing the Government. The people are well organized, and any attempt to suppress a rising will result in a loss of a large number of British soldiers. We know perfectly well that it is not so much for the good of India that the natives are being suppressed as it is for the aggrandisement of the people who have capital invested there, and which the British Government desire to protect. It would not, of course, be the first capitalistic war in which Australian soldiers had been engaged, and I do not suppose it would be the last, because so far as one can understand there has not been any war which has not been essentially capitalistic. I strongly protest against anything being done at the forthcoming Imperial Conference which will embroil Australia in any such quarrels, and I object to the manhood of Australia being transported overseas for the protection of interests other than Australian. When we are told that the White Australia policy is to be determined in India instead of in Australia, no doubt many of those recent converts to the policy will consider that they have achieved their object.

In regard to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, it is quite understandable that the British Government, apart from the Dominion Governments, should enter into an agreement with Japan to protect capitalistic interests. But when such a Treaty is made, and when it is likely to embroil certain portions of the British Empire, such as South Africa, with a fairly large white population, Canada, Newfoundland, New Zealand, and Australia, it is, of course, a different matter. For a number of years I have been of the opinion that no agreement should be entered into, or subscribed to by Australia, which does not include America. An agreement between England and Japan cannot be of benefit to Australia, or even of interest to the Commonwealth. Nothing is to be gained by such an alliance, and much cannot be lost. I have already stated that the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) only misrepresents the ideals and aspirations of the Australian people. Unfortunately, he is going, although we did our best to stop him; but if he is confronted with an agreement, he should not ratify anything that is likely to be in any way antagonistic to America.

Mr. BELL.—Does the honorable member think he will be asked to ratify anything?

Mr. BLAKELEY.—The Prime Minister has made many contradictory statements in this House, and has the art of making utterances in an airy fashion; but when any one tries to pin him down to his statements as the honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan) and the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) endeavoured to do to-night he evades the question. The Prime Minister first said that Australia had to ratify the Treaty, and that it would be brought back to this House to be ratified; and then he said that, irrespective of what this House did, the Treaty would go on. He cannot be pinned down to any statement. His speech was delightfully vague. He will agree with any one and contradict every body; and when he goes to the Imperial Conference he will adopt a similar attitude, so that whether we like it or not, his presence there will mean that we will be irrevocably attached to something distasteful to the people of Australia. We, on this side, represent a majority of the people. We represent more closely the aspirations and ideals of the Australian people than do the Government, because 95 per cent. of the population are of the working class.

Mr. JACKSON.—It is a pity you cannot convince them that they should vote for you.

Mr. BLAKELEY.—The people of Australia cannot be convinced that the Government are representing their interests.

Mr. JACKSON.—They have been convinced of that all right.

Mr. BLAKELEY.—Honorable members may be in power it is true, by the use of the thimble and pea, the two-headed penny, or the three-card trick, but that does not signify that they represent the people of Australia. There are such things as giving the sweat wheel a little assistance, and that assistance has been given most generously. But the two-headed penny, the three-card trick, and the use of the thimble and pea are not a circumstance to the joke worked by the Government at the last election, especially in the matter of the Senate so-called proportional representation.

I haven't the slightest doubt the Prime Minister will pledge Australia to something which, for the time being, most

honorable members do not contemplate. Some honorable members on the Ministerial side have said in unmistakable language that they are prepared to subscribe to an Imperial naval system. They claim that if the Empire is to have a navy it must be controlled by a central head. It is a fairly plausible argument, and under other conditions would be logical, but it is altogether a different question when the people of Australia are to be asked to get a fleet together and maintain it in peace, and have it taken away from them in war. In fact, during the last war our fleet was taken away, so that instead of Australian men-of-war being in our harbors, Japanese cruisers were substituted for them.

I am against the Prime Minister going to the Imperial Conference, because he is not truly representative of Australia. Neither he nor any member of his Ministry has laid on the table a full statement of the questions to be discussed at the Conference. I am opposed to Australia entering into any system of an Imperial Navy. I am quite convinced that, notwithstanding the protestations we have heard with regard to the White Australia policy, and notwithstanding the many enthusiastic rejections of the points made by this side, Australia, by virtue of the fact that its Prime Minister is attending this Conference, will find itself, whether we like it or not, with yokes upon it which it will take years to remove.

Mr. MAKIN (Hindmarsh). [12.18 a.m.]. — After having listened very patiently to the many contributions to this debate, I realize the gravity of the position facing the people of Australia involved in the question at present demanding the consideration of honorable members. The consequences may be more far-reaching, perhaps, than the great bulk of the people comprehend. If the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) is to be allowed to use his own discretion upon many matters of an Imperial character in which Australia is to be involved, I am satisfied that before many years have passed the people of this country will regret that he was ever intrusted with the responsibility of representing them at an Imperial Conference. We are told that there are two great factors to be considered at the forthcoming Conference—the ratification of the Treaty between

Great Britain and Japan and the future defence policy of the British Empire. Australia is evidently to be regarded as accepting her share of the obligation which will be imposed upon the Empire in connexion with these two matters without her people being afforded an opportunity to fully understand the merits of the proposals to which she will be committed. The Prime Minister has told us that we are confronted with a position which is grave in the extreme. "What are we to do?" he asks. "What is our policy to be? We depend for our very existence upon the maintenance of control by Britain. Britain says that she cannot longer afford to maintain the Navy at its relative pre-war strength, and calls upon the Dominions to consider the question, and presumably to contribute their share." I ask the right honorable gentleman what reason there is for assuming that the present position is grave in the extreme. After the greatest war upon record, a war which has burdened the Empire with a staggering debt, we are told within three years of the signing of the armistice that we are threatened with another war. If that be so, the people of this country should realize that they have been tricked in regard to the part which Australia played in the war. To-day we are so involved financially that we cannot afford to incur any fresh obligations in order to provide a more adequate defence for the Commonwealth. We have a war debt of £350,000,000, and our public debt to 30th June, 1920, totals more than £405,000,000. Despite the sacrifices which we made in blood and treasure, we are now told by the Prime Minister that a fresh war is likely to be precipitated in the near future.

Mr. BAMFORD.—What is the honorable member going to do about it?

Mr. MAKIN.—Instead of dealing with the effects of war we should attempt to deal with the cause of it. So long as we allow considerations of selfishness to control the affairs of nations we shall be quite unable to solve the difficult international problems which confront us. What did we find at the close of the recent war? Within forty-eight hours of the armistice being signed, representatives of not merely the commercial institutions of Great Britain, but of other allied countries, were in Germany endeavouring to secure

the custom of our late enemies. I am very suspicious of any proposal which is likely to involve Australia in a position which may ultimately prove to be embarrassing to us. I repeat what was said by the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) this evening, and, if I understand the psychology of the people of this country aright, they are not prepared to take the side of any Asiatic race in preference to that of a white race.

Mr. FOLEY.—The Japanese entered the war for the purpose of assisting the Empire far sooner than did at least one white race.

Mr. MAKIN.—If Japan rendered service to the Allies during the recent war, I have no doubt that she received a *qui pro quo*. I believe that if some of the secret history of the war were revealed it would form very interesting reading.

Sitting suspended from 12.27 to 1.5 a.m.

Mr. MAKIN.—If further proof is required of the inability of Australia to bear additional naval and military expenditure it is to be found in the report of the Economies Commission, which shows that the total non-war expenditure for 1918-19—a year of peace—was £30,375,626, while the war expenditure was £100,044,411. No nation could continue such an expenditure without plunging headlong into financial ruin. It would be suicidal for Australia to become more deeply involved in an expenditure which is wholly unproductive save in so far as it produces disaster and distress. The question of whether we should be committed to a further expenditure on Empire defence should be submitted to the people of Australia for indorsement or otherwise.

Mr. MAXWELL.—We have been told that that will be done.

Mr. MAKIN.—Had the honorable member followed the Prime Minister's statement closely he would not have made that assertion. The people who will ultimately be called upon to foot the bill in respect of any additional expenditure on Empire Defence have a right to be consulted as to whether that expenditure should be incurred.

Mr. MAXWELL.—Does the honorable member suggest that the Prime Minister, as the representative of Australia at the

Conference, will commit the Commonwealth to any further expenditure of the kind without consulting this House?

Mr. MAKIN.—He will consult the House, but not the people of Australia.

Mr. FOLEY.—Does not the honorable member regard himself as a representative of the people?

Mr. MAKIN.—I do; there are 51,000 electors in my constituency, but my views on this question will count for little, so far as the Prime Minister and the majority behind him are concerned. The questions to be dealt with at the Imperial Conference are of such importance that before we are committed to any policy in regard to them the people themselves should have a direct opportunity to register their views upon them. It should be left to them to say whether Australia shall be involved to any greater extent in the financial morass.

We have been told that Australia is in a position of grave danger. I should like to know what nation threatens the safety and well-being of Australia and the Empire as a whole. What nation is responsible for the grave and extreme danger in which we are told we stand? If by any chance the country which is a menace to Australia should be that with which Great Britain proposes to enter into a Treaty—a Treaty that we shall be asked to indorse—surely we have a right to be told of it. The people of Australia have a right to be heard with regard to the text of any agreements proposed to be made with other countries. Whilst the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) was speaking, however, the Prime Minister clearly indicated by interjection that the views of Australia would count for little in the Imperial Councils, and that the text of any treaty made between Great Britain and Japan would be that laid down by Imperial statesmen, quite irrespective of what might be the desire of the representative of the Commonwealth. If that is so, Australia is standing in a false position. If we are expected to accept the responsibility for diplomatic relations between the Empire and other countries as arranged, with little or no regard to our views, by Imperial statesmen, the people should be made aware of that fact.

Mr. BELL.—Who said that our views would have little weight in the Imperial Councils?

Mr. MAKIN.—The Prime Minister, by way of interjection while the honorable member for Bourke was speaking, said that any Treaty signed by Great Britain and Japan would be in accordance with the desires of Imperial statesmen, irrespective of what might be our views.

Mr. BELL.—I do not think he even implied anything of the kind.

Mr. MAKIN.—I have a reasonable understanding of the value of language, and I could draw no other inference from his statement.

The people of Australia desire to live in peace with all mankind. We have no grievance against the people of other countries, and so far as I can see, the only disturbing element in international affairs is the dissatisfaction which certain commercial enterprises feel with regard to certain operations affecting the world's commerce. The honorable member for Barrier (Mr. Considine) touched a vital spot when he referred to the oil interests. He referred to the way in which the different trusts interested in that commodity are manœuvring for a position of advantage. They would have no compunction about involving a country in war if, by doing so, they might further their own interests.

Mr. FOLEY.—Would not the One Big Union exercise the same influence on industrialism in Australia?

Mr. MAKIN.—The question of the One Big Union is not relevant to the matter we are now considering, and I must ask the honorable member to bring it forward at the right time and place. I may then direct his attention to some things connected with that question, which are referred to in to-day's newspapers. Do honorable members believe that the nations of the earth desire to be involved in another conflict such as that through which they have just passed? I am satisfied that if there were a plebiscite of the peoples of the earth on the question an almost unanimous vote would be recorded for universal peace, so that a better understanding might be brought about between one nation and another. Those who desire to stir up strife amongst the nations of the earth will, no doubt, find

opportunity to fan the feelings of national hatred which influence many whose purpose it is to keep the peoples of the earth apart.

Mr. BAMFORD.—Even the members of the Labour Conference in New South Wales were fighting each other.

Mr. MAKIN.—I remind the honorable member that I am in possession of the floor, and his interjection is not relevant to the subject now under consideration. I find that in the *Melbourne Herald* of 1st June, 1920, it is stated that not one country is content with what came to it out of the war and out of the peace. That is one of the strongest reasons that could be urged against further wars.

Mr. BELL.—My country is satisfied.

Mr. MAKIN.—The *Melbourne Herald* says that not one country is satisfied. It is one of the leading journals of Melbourne and of Australia, and, as it does not occupy the position of a partisan, it may fairly interpret the views of those directly concerned in international affairs. The peoples of the earth can never be fully compensated for the sacrifices of the last European war and the burdens it imposed upon them, and, instead of our statesmen endeavouring to create a position of international alarm, they should use their best efforts to prevent misunderstandings between nations. In a country like Australia, it is said to be impossible to pay a basic wage which will afford a reasonable standard of comfort to the people; and yet there are those in our midst who endeavour to commit the community to an expenditure that will certainly bring no direct advantage, but rather involve us more deeply in our present difficulties. That is a false position for this country to occupy; and until such time as the people, by popular vote, have an opportunity to express themselves regarding further naval and military expenditure, there is no justification for burdening the taxpayers—for burdening them with the consequences of the creation of great military machines as the price of securing peace. It is only natural, when nations build up great war machines, that there should arise a temptation to those in authority to use them and see how powerful they can be when exercised against an opposing nation. It would be well for the Prime Minister, when at the Imperial Conference, to secure such an agreement between Great Britain

and Japan as would include the United States of America, and be entirely satisfactory to that country. Unless that be so, as sure as night follows day we shall be involved in a struggle the consequences of which we cannot estimate. I have no doubt that the question of a White Australia will be raised, and that that very laudable sentiment will be exploited, as many other laudable sentiments were during the war. It will be very interesting, in the future history of the world, and of Australia in particular, to observe how public men were at this time prepared to take advantage of the greatest of all Australian sentiments in a time of international crisis.

I desire to say a few words on some other matters which are likely to be discussed at the Imperial Conference, and in which Australian interests may be involved. The Prime Minister, on the present occasion, has endeavoured to make us believe that he is opposed to Imperial Federation—that he feels it would be most undesirable to entertain such an idea. But while he tries to allay fear and suspicion in this connexion, the deliberations at the Imperial Conference will very largely determine what questions will engage the attention of Imperial and Dominion statesmen when they come to deal with the constitutional aspects of the Empire. I find that in June, 1916, the Prime Minister, when speaking in London, said of Imperial Federation—

This is a policy for the whole British Empire, which should cover every page of our national, social, and economic life.

Yet he would have us believe now that he has no desire to involve Australia in any form of Imperial Federation. As a people we have great need to fear it, because of the manner in which it would be likely to intrude on our self-governing rights. Imperialism and Democracy do not present merely a subject for academic controversy over forms of government, but represent a basic division of the public mind regarding the whole theory of government. Nationalism and Imperialism are essentially capitalistic, in that they rest upon an economic foundation, and are inspired by the desire of the profiteering agencies for wider spheres of exploitation. I am pleased to find that there has already been impressed upon the minds of some of those who have

visited our shores a feeling that any proposal to relieve Australia of its self-governing rights, and subordinate this country to a form of Imperial Federation, does not meet with our approval. Mr. B. K. Long, the Dominion editor of the *Times*, who was in Australia about September last, says—

The Australian is jealous of the right to govern himself and is resentful of dictation from outside. Imperialism in the conventional sense is most unpopular.

I hope the Prime Minister will not forget that impression which Mr. Long received, but will realize that Australia is for the full rights of self-government to the Dominions with no form of Imperial Federation. Mr. Long further says that wherever one goes in Australia it is only necessary to mention Imperial Federation to find the instant resentment of Australians to dictation from Downing-street. In this connexion it is interesting to refer to an incident at a banquet to the Prince of Wales, held in Adelaide during the recent Royal visit. Mr. Barwell, the then Premier of South Australia, who is certainly an Imperialist, said that some unitary authority for the Empire was desirable. The newspaper account of what occurred said that the remark was received "with chilling silence." That "chilling silence" exactly represents the feeling of the people of Australia towards any form of government in which their voice cannot effectively be heard. We have learned to value our self-governing rights as a Dominion, and we hold that we have established our claim to govern ourselves; so far from assenting to any curtailment of our powers, we regard it as essential that they should be widened. Instead of being subject to the veto of Imperial councils, Australia should have full jurisdiction over its own affairs. I do not say that with any intention of being disloyal to the best interests of the Empire. I respect our association and relation to Great Britain, but I am certainly not going to be allured by the so-called glories of Empire, when I learn that there are to-day, according to Board of Trade estimates, 3,000,000 people on the verge of starvation. A nation's or Empire's true greatness is not to be measured by geography or commerce, but by the happiness, contentment, and righteous

inclinations of the people constituting that nation or Empire. All I say is that whilst we, as Australians, desire to associate ourselves in the most cordial manner with the United Kingdom, we are not involved in any obligation to subordinate our rights to an Imperial Council. During recent months, I have noticed how the Imperial financiers have endeavoured to use their influence over Australian affairs of State. When the Labour Premiers of two Australian States approached them for financial accommodation, they were subjected to certain embarrassments, and were requested to repeal certain legislative enactments of their States before they could receive the accommodation they required. I am pleased that the Premier of Queensland (Mr. Theodore) was sufficiently seized of the importance of retaining to the people of his State their self-governing rights to refuse the assistance of the London financiers on such conditions. The strength of public character shown by Mr. Theodore in that case might well be emulated by other public men who may require to go abroad on missions connected with the affairs of the States or the Commonwealth. The tendency of to-day, from an Imperial stand-point, is to vest immense powers in a central authority to which all other interests are subordinated. The antithesis of Imperialism is to invest those powers in the people themselves, and that is exactly what the amendment moved by the honorable member for West Sydney proposes. Instead of submitting these important matters to a small body of men seated round an Imperial Conference table, and perhaps subjecting the citizens of Australia to proposals with which they are not in sympathy, we contend that the people must have a direct opportunity of voicing their opinions on them. The position taken up by the Australian Labour party justifies its claim to be an Australian movement. What is required in Australia to-day amongst our public men is a more correct estimate of their position as Australians. We want better Australians among our public men than we have now. We want men who are prepared to place the interests of Australia first, and to recognise that their first duty as representatives of the people of this great continent is to those people. Then, when

we are reasonably assured of ample protection for our own people, if we can cooperate in a cordial manner with other portions of what is known as the British Empire, we shall be only too happy to do so, but I am not going to be a party, nor is the movement to which I belong prepared in any respect to be a party, to subordinating the interests of Australia to any Imperial Council, or to any Imperial statesmen. When I read the pages of history, I find that many Imperial statesmen have had very little sympathy with the sentiment of a White Australia, and that they would be prepared at the first opportunity, if it paid them, to subordinate that principle and involve us in an embarrassing position. What happened in South Africa after the Boer War demonstrates the truth of my contention. Although loyal support was given to the cause for which the British Empire was fighting in that contest by many citizens of various parts of the Empire who went to South Africa to fight, what was their recompense and reward? Only to see a flood of coolies and Chinese labour let into the South African mines. If it paid the British capitalist, and many of the Imperial statesmen, to throw overboard our White Australia policy, I feel that they have such little respect or consideration for the interests of this country that they would be prepared to do it.

Mr. BAYLEY.—The honorable member misjudges them.

Mr. MAKIN.—I do not.

Mr. FOWLER.—That is a gross libel on British statesmen. The honorable member cannot name a single British statesman who has suggested the abandonment of the White Australia principle.

Mr. MAKIN.—History justifies my contention. May I refer my honorable friends to the permission given for indentured coolie labour to Fiji, and the startling disclosures in the Imperial Blue-book. The way in which we find to-day the best interests of national life subordinated, and even prostituted at times, for financial gain, proves to me that even a nation's soul will be bought and sold by those capitalists and financial agencies who have as their representatives and agents many men who sit in the Parliament of Great Britain. Their object is the aggrandizement of British capitalism, and the individual British citizen is to them no more

than an instrument for the making of profit. I make no apology for my statement. It is in the best interests of this country that we should speak plainly in order that those at the seat of the Imperial Government may know that we desire them to prove their sympathy by deeds and not by words alone. I should like them to understand that we in Australia, whilst we have every desire to maintain and safeguard the interests of Australia, and recognise that the people of this country have first call on us, feel it our duty to co-operate cordially with the Imperial statesmen if it is possible for us to do so. We are not, however, going to allow ourselves to be dominated by those great agencies which are the creation of war, and involved in further payments for naval and military purposes until the people of Australia have had an opportunity of expressing their opinion.

DECLARATION OF URGENCY.

Sir JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Treasurer) [1.37 a.m.].—I declare this motion to be an urgent motion, and move—

That the motion be considered an urgent motion.

I am doing this merely as a precaution to get the vote taken to-day (Friday). If only those who are here had to deal with the matter I should be quite sure of my ground, but we cannot tell what those who are away may do to-morrow when they turn up.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

13 M

LIMITATION OF DEBATE.

Sir JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Treasurer) [1.38].—I move—

That the time allotted for the debate on the motion and the amendment be until 3.45 p.m. this day (Friday).

Mr. RYAN (West Sydney) [1.40 a.m.].—I regret that the Treasurer has moved to curtail the debate on such an important matter as this. It would be most unfortunate if, through the moving of this motion of urgency, any honorable member were prevented from expressing his views upon the question. I know that we cannot prevent the motion being carried, but I should like to have an understanding as to whether the carrying of it will interfere in any way with the transaction of ordinary business in the morning.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The Speaker might leave the chair until 11 o'clock instead of adjourning the House, and that would prevent any other business intervening.

Mr. RYAN.—That is what I am trying to prevent. I do not think that we should curtail the privileges of members at the next sitting. Some other business of an urgent nature might arise, and I hope that it will not be interfered with in any way.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Debate on original question (on motion by Mr. FOWLER) adjourned.

House adjourned at 1.48 a.m. (Friday).



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1. Sworn 27th February, 1920.—2. Sworn 3rd March, 1920.—3. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 4th March, 1920.—4. Made affirmation, 5th March, 1920.—5. Election declared void, 2nd June, 1920.— ⁶ Sworn 11th May, 1920.—6. Elected 10th July, 1920. Sworn 21st July, 1920.—7. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 13th May, 1920.—8. Expelled and seat declared vacant, 12th November, 1920.—9. Elected 18th December, 1920. Sworn 6th April, 1921.	Stewart, Percy Gerald .. Wimmera (V.)	
		Story, William Harrison .. Boothby (S.A.)
		Tudor, Hon. Frank Gwynne Yarra (V.)
		⁸ Watkins, Hon. David .. Newcastle (N.S.W.)
		Watt, Right Hon. William Balaclava (V.)
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		West, John Edward .. East Sydney (N.S.W.)
		Wienholt, Arnold .. Moreton (Q.)
		Wise, Hon. George Henry .. Gippsland (V.)

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*Appointed 14th April, 1921.

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